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WHAT DISTINGUISHES OUR PARTY – The line running from Marx to Lenin to the foundation of the Third International and the birth of the Communist Party of Italy in Leghorn (Livorno) 1921, and from there to the struggle of the Italian Communist Left against the degeneration in Moscow and to the rejection of popular fronts and coalition of resistance groups – The tough work of restoring the revolutionary doctrine and the party organ, in contact with the working class, outside the realm of personal politics and electoralist manoeuvrings

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LABOR NOTES CONFERENCE 2026:

THE DIVIDE BETWEEN THE LABOR LEFT AND THE CLASS UNION OF THE FUTURE

Many of the workers gathered at the Labor Notes 2026 conference represent some of the most combative sections of the labor movement in the United States. They come frustrated with a regime union leadership that smothers strikes, negotiates concessions in back rooms, and delivers workers into the hands of the bosses. That frustration is legitimate and driven by a passionate desire to fight for their class, confronting the issues that face it within the monstrosity of capitalism. The question is where that frustration and passion goes from here.

Labor Notes and the broader current of the labor left pushing union reformism have an answer. They offer union democracy, supposedly labor-friendly politicians, and legal strategies. They offer the promise of a general strike framed as the defense of democracy against authoritarianism, organized by coalitions such as May Day Strong, an amalgam of union locals, Democratic Party-connected organizations, liberal activist groups, and opportunist political organizations. These answers feel like militancy and combativity. They borrow the language of struggle and invoke the history of past mighty battles of the working class. But their effect is to corral the most combative sections of the working class back into the collaborationist union line and agenda, dissipating the fighting energies that could otherwise land real blows on the bosses.

As imperialist war spreads and deepens alongside capitalism's social and economic crises, the stakes of this misdirection could not be higher. The same forces that sell workers on defending democracy today will mobilize them to die for the nation and fatherland tomorrow. It is therefore critical that workers distinguish between real class militancy and its counterfeit.

This article defines the labor left, their union reformism, exposes their false posturing as class militants, and contrasts them with class unionism and class union organization: what the working class actually needs to defend itself and break from the grip of a ruling class that will otherwise drag it into another imperialist war.

What is the Labor Left?

Generally, we can define the labor left as those who posture as militants in the fight against the bosses. As we can see today, this labor left ties itself to the political forces of petty-bourgeois reformism within broader coalition efforts in the defense of democracy, such as Indivisible, No Kings and the 50501 Movement. These petty-bourgeois reformers need workers on their side and, to accomplish this, support a limited program of union reform that the labor left in turn sells to workers as a version of militancy. However, this program remains firmly within the bounds of bourgeois law, which ultimately contains the workers' movement, preventing it from generalizing its struggle and fighting for its own interest.

Union reformism is a tactic that seeks to re-form the regime unions by increasing democratic mechanisms and participation in them. Examples include one-member, one-vote schemes, open collective bargaining, or the use of state injunctions to force out entrenched old leadership and install more supposedly progressive, democratic leadership. The problems with union reformism are as follows. First, whether or not regime unions are made more democratic does not change their material mandate and function within capitalism, which they are obliged to perform: a mandate to impose labor peace on workers to the detriment of their conditions. To do anything else would risk the union being taken out by the state and capital's labor lieutenants losing their comfortable positions within ruling circles. The regime unions can and do perform their function within capitalism with democratic mechanisms. Second, union democracy is insufficient in principle as a solution to class collaborationism: even where democratic mechanisms are installed, collabora-

tionist forces can and do reassert control through manipulation of those very processes.

Putting the unions and workers' defensive organs back into the hands of the working class will require a much more profound change than merely altering the method by which the current union apparatus is administered through giving more members access to decision making. It will require a revolutionary upsurge within the class, with leadership that leads on a class basis, helps the working class understand its fundamental difference of interest from the bosses, and shows that it is in its best interest as a class to engage in real struggle. This movement must emerge from the grassroots of the class itself as a result of real historical developments and the growing contradictions of capitalist economy and society. It is not something that can be willed into being through the heroic acts of individuals, small groups of activists using clever tactics and voting blocs to elect this or that leader, nor through merely opening the union to more voting participation at the base, which will have no meaning if those who lead the union continue to lead workers down blind alleys while the masses show no spontaneous impulse towards more militant action.

Such a bottom-up movement of the masses of workers cannot come from the top down through electing new leaders and administrators of the regime unions. There must be a generalized movement based on non-conformity to the established union organization that mandates an all-pervasive policy of class collaboration at every level. This movement must emerge not through the tactical maneuvering of established union leadership within the law, but through the self-organization of the working class at its base: advancing aggressive wage demands that increase workers' real wages, developing strike committees to organize strikes at the grassroots level outside the hands of boss-linked leaders, building territorial links between all workers' organizations, and setting sights toward building generalized strike power.

What is the Class Union?

Class unionism and class union organization can be defined by its lack of connection to and conciliation with the state and its apparatuses, bourgeois parties, government agencies, and laws the ruling class puts in place to extinguish the flames of class struggle. Class unionism and class union organization struggles on clear class lines for the working class to elevate its spontaneous impulses towards effectively organized collective action. It has no shared interest with the capitalist class. It spans across the imposed divisions within the working class, whether racial, national, or otherwise, relying above all on the greatest weapon in the working class's arsenal: the strike and, more broadly, the general strike.

One example from United States history is the old IWW (Industrial Workers of the World). Organizing across craft lines on an industrial basis, the IWW united immigrant and native-born workers alike, waging militant strike action regardless of the legal constraints imposed by the bourgeois state. It stood apart from the opportunist unionism of its time in its principled opposition to the First World War, refusing to subordinate the working class to the imperialist slaughter until it was brutally attacked and mostly dismantled during the Red Scare. It was precisely this class independence that made it a target for destruction by the bosses, the bourgeois state, which carried out raids, deportations, blacklists, and the outright murder of its militants, and the AFL, which collaborated with employers and the state to drive out class unionism and secure its own place within the ruling order.

Such class unionist struggle and organization does not arise from consciousness-raising around some set of grand ideas, but rather from doing the hard, concrete work of organizing along these lines across the working class, weaving a

network during times of malaise that rapidly blossoms and expands in times of extreme capitalist crisis and deprivation. It is precisely such conditions that leave no other option but to draw clear class lines and organize on those lines on a mass basis, forcing a break with the regime union leadership who, in critical moments, unequivocally reveal themselves as class traitors.

It cannot emerge merely through the activist impulses of small groups but requires the great masses of workers to be drawn into active class struggle, as was seen in the earlier part of the last century due to the cataclysmic social crisis of that time. The inherent crisis-ridden nature of capitalist economy guarantees that such conditions will one day arise again. Thus it is the obligation of worker militants today to work where possible to establish nuclei of the future class union movement, to reject class collaborationist compromise, and to clarify the real grounds of class struggle wherever the working class shows itself willing to fight. The task is to bring together any such emergent groups into closer coordination, establishing links and working toward a class struggle united front from below that can advocate for unified strike action and bring larger sections of workers into direct conflict with the capitalist class.

The Labor Left and the Democratic Party

The opportunism of the labor left and their union reformism can be seen clearly across three illustrative fronts: its subordination to bourgeois political parties; its over-reliance on bourgeois legality and the state apparatus; and the tactics and demands it promotes under the guise of militancy. Examining each exposes how thoroughly opportunism has penetrated the labor movement and why a genuine break with it is a precondition for any real advance of the working class.

First, one clear marker of the labor left is its connection to bourgeois political parties, especially social democrats and, in the United States, the Democratic Party, whereas class unions historically struggled independent of bourgeois political parties and politicians. In Labor Notes, the organization's support for social democrats and ultimately the Democratic Party is not merely a matter of political tendency but of organizational and financial reality: its leadership and financial backing are closely tied to the AFL-CIO and the Democratic Party. We can see this reflected in their press, where the election of labor-friendly Democratic politicians is sold to workers as a pillar of struggle to improve conditions and advance the fight of the working class, and in allowing the Mayor of Chicago to speak at last year's Labor Notes conference. The same subordination of the labor left is on full display beyond the pages of Labor Notes.

At the 2024 Democratic National Convention, UAW President Shawn Fain, supported by Labor Notes and whose union has been among the most vocal proponents of the May Day 2028 general strike, addressed the crowd and declared: "This election comes down to one question, Which side are you on? On one side we have Kamala Harris and Tim Walz who have stood shoulder to shoulder with the working class. For us in the labor movement, it's really simple. Kamala Harris is one of us." One of us? Thus the supposedly combative leader of one of the most prominent unions in the United States attempts to tie the working class to the bourgeois order, exactly as the labor left always has.

The problem is that the state, as Marxism makes clear, is dominated and controlled by the capitalist class and is the prime instrument for imposing the will of the capitalist class on workers and for repressing the working class when it rises up, ensuring capital accumulation continues and crises are managed. Even the social welfare measures promoted by social democrats and so fervently supported by the labor left ultimately

serve capital in a bid to calm deprivation and social and economic crisis, and to subsidize wages, improving the bosses' bottom line, that are paid according to the cost of sustaining a worker. Such a state and its politicians are therefore incapable of providing any genuine solidarity in the struggle of the working class. Those who sell workers on supporting social democrats, the Democratic Party, the Republican Party, or any bourgeois party misdirect the workers' struggle into a dead end that ultimately reinforces capitalism and the role of the bourgeois state.

The Labor Left's Historic Support for Imperialism

The stakes of this subordination extend way beyond the United States. The Democratic Party, same as the Republican Party, is the party of US imperialism, the same imperialism that today wages war in Venezuela and Iran in pursuit of energy dominance and the suppression of its rivals. History makes the connection between the labor left, social democracy, and imperialist war unmistakably clear. While Sean Fain praises the role of U.S. imperialism in building the "arsenal of democracy" to allegedly fight fascism, today he openly supports Donald Trump's tariffs which are designed to once again develop the U.S. war economy. While he hypocritically condemns Trump's fascism, he presents himself as a defender of fascist economic and union policy.

In the First World War, the social democrats of the Second International, who had pledged working-class solidarity across borders, voted for war credits and sent workers to slaughter each other in the trenches, in what Lenin correctly identified as a fundamental betrayal of the proletariat. In the United States, the AFL under Samuel Gompers struck a direct bargain with the Wilson administration: guaranteeing military production and a steady supply of proletarian cannon fodder for the trenches in exchange for legal recognition by the bourgeois state, collaborating with the government to suppress strikes and discipline the working class for the imperialist slaughter. In the Second World War, the CIO's (Congress of Industrial Organizations) accepted no-strike pledges that froze the gains of the 1930s strike wave and subordinated workers' economic struggles to the war effort, ensuring capital accumulated unimpeded through wartime production. Many of the CIO union leaders where members of the Stalinized, Communist Party of the United States of America, which had by this time accepted the disastrous popular front policies of Moscow, endorsing the New Deal program; thus when the bourgeois after the war again shifted into a massive red scare campaign following the post war strike wave, they found themselves politically isolated from the working class and easily purged.

The labor left's subordination to the Democratic Party today reproduces this historic pattern. Due to capitalism's inexorable cycles of crisis caused by overproduction, the bourgeois requires war to overcome these crises through destruction of workers and capital to restart the cycle of accumulation. Thus a generalized imperialist war will come. Protection of nation and democracy is evoked to mobilize the working class for such a war. And a labor movement chained to the parties of US imperialism is not capable of opposing such an imperialist war. When the moment demands, if the labor left and the regime unions prevail, the labor movement will be mobilized behind it.

The Regime Unions and the Legal Regulatory Apparatus

Second, running alongside the labor left's subordination to bourgeois parties is its over-reliance on legalistic forms of struggle. Where party subordination chains the working class to the political apparatus of the ruling class, legalism chains it to the state's regulatory apparatus, constraining the struggle to form the ruling class can tolerate and control. Labor Notes and other elements of the labor left are examples of this. They seek the use of state injunctions to impose new leadership in regime unions and democratize them. They hold up the NLRB (National Labor Relations Board) and related state regulations and laws as the greatest achievement in the history of the United States labor movement, spilling tears at its current dismantling, and treat the contract ne-

gotiations outlined by such laws and regulations as sacred protections for the working class and the regime unions. What they fail to reckon with is what this legal framework actually contains. The Taft-Hartley Act, once dubbed the "slave labor act" by the labor movement itself, criminalized solidarity and sympathy strikes, restricted the right to organize, and at one point explicitly outlawed Marxists and communists from holding union leadership positions. The legal regime the labor left defends, was built precisely to drive class militants out of the unions and ensure the working class could never use its organized power to threaten capital. And where such laws openly repress the working class, the labor left seeks only to change those laws, for example as in the states where it is illegal for public workers to strike. And then there's the grievance processes: endless paperwork that usually amounts to nothing but the wasted energy of well-intentioned stewards fighting for their coworkers. The problem is that all of this flows from the bourgeois state and thus only serves the preservation of capital and its accumulation, meaning the control of the working class.

Looking back, the NLRB arose out of the state's attempt to manage the capitalist crisis of the Great Depression, which gave rise to mass strikes and labor conflict. The Wagner Act sought to ensure labor peace for employers by constraining workers within the system of collective bargaining, ultimately preparing them for the next major imperialist war, WWII. The consequences of this legal straitjacket continue today. In 2022, railroad workers voted to reject a contract and prepared to strike. Before a single worker could walk off the job, Congressional intervention led by the Democratic Party, with the collaboration of union leaders, forced the contract onto workers against their will and ended the strike before it began. This is legalism in practice: the very framework the labor left defends was used by the party they support to strip workers of their most fundamental weapon at the moment they were prepared to use it. What is ultimately called for is a break with these legal frameworks. The NLRB straitjacket must, and likely will be broken. As fascism dictated by economic crisis demands the total subordination of the working class and the regime unions, the NLRB and related apparatuses need to be wiped away as is currently happening in a capitalism that can't even afford faux working-class struggle.

The Labor Left, It's Fake Strikes and False Combativity

Third, we can see a major difference in the tactics and demands promoted by the labor left and union reformism versus those of class unions and class union organization. The strike and general strike action are tactics invoked by both sides. However, we must look closely to see the difference between them. For one, the labor left typically relies almost exclusively on legal striking, that is, striking that is acceptable to and controllable by the ruling class. Class union organization, by contrast, focuses on striking regardless of the bourgeois state's mandates and on extending the strike as far as possible, generalizing it across sections of the working class. It has become popular these days, as it was in the past, to invoke the term "general strike" and promote one, when in reality no actual strike is intended. Labor Notes makes this explicit in their own press, describing their ideal general strike as "a broad-based general strike, sometimes called a civic shutdown, that includes not only workers, but also supportive local governments, churches, media institutions, professional associations, and even some businesses." What is described is not a strike at all but a civic shutdown encompassing various elements across the classes: churches, local governments, small businesses, students, and shoppers, asking people as individuals to stop work, stay home from school, and delay shopping for a day or two.

The Minneapolis "general strike" of January 2026 illustrates this precisely. The action arose in response to Operation Metro Surge, an ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) and CBP (Customs and Border Protection) occupation of Minneapolis that explicitly and racially targeted Somali and Latino workers. Trump had publicly labeled Somali workers as "garbage," and ICE agents had been authorized to enter private residences with administrative warrants, bypassing judicial approval in a break (*cont pg 2*)

May Day 2026: Workers of the World, Unite! Against Rearmament! Against War! For Communism!

The following is an international leaflet distributed at demonstrations in the United States, Venezuela, Turkey, and Italy
Workers! Comrades!

May Day is the day when the world proletariat reaffirms its identity as an international class, the historic enemy of capital, united in solidarity across all national borders. While capitalism—as promising peace and progress—is dragging humanity toward a new catastrophic war, we reaffirm that the only war the proletariat has to fight is that of the exploited against the exploiters.

Because the working class of every country gains nothing by taking sides in defense of the homeland and the national interests of its own bourgeoisie and state, whether Ukrainian or Russian, Iranian or American, Israeli or an illusory Palestinian state.

Wars are no longer fought to establish national states and modern regimes, but are monstrous convulsions of capitalism in its chaotic historical death throes, which can no longer find outlets for its goods amid the crisis of production and profits.

This need for the destruction wrought by war is recognized by the various imperialist states, which plunge into the abyss not for the idealistic, nationalistic, or religious reasons with which they justify the extermination of entire peoples, but for their own selfish material interests: the conquest of strategic positions and the hoarding of raw materials. In addition to the enormous profiteering involved in the production and sale of bombs, missiles, aircraft, tanks...

These true causes of war are concealed from the working class in order to drag it to the front lines, through ideological terrorism and insane and brutal militarist propaganda. The "enemy" is dehumanized to justify massacres and slaughter. Modern wars, increasingly destructive, are designed to mow down the lives of proletarians at an industrial pace. In fact, the reintroduction of compulsory military service is already being planned in countries where it had been suspended. The working class is sacrificed to bourgeois war. Today, the rearmament of states is imposed on workers through wage cuts, the enforcement of social discipline, and cuts to healthcare, education, and other services.

Bourgeois pacifism, by fostering the illusion of a peaceful capitalism governed by law and international institutions, distracts the working class from its subversive role and thus becomes a fifth column of militarism.

An equal danger to the proletariat's sound direction is posed by the so-called communist parties, which would like to position it on one side or the other of the shifting front-line of conflict between imperialist powers, in partisan resistance stances, under the pretext of defending alleged victims of aggression or national emancipation. All imperialist powers are at once aggressors and victims of aggression, and there are no longer any unresolved national issues in the world that could serve a progressive social function; rather, they are nothing more than instruments of imperialist war—that is, the supreme reactionary instrument.

Capitalism has exhausted every progressive

function it once had everywhere: by now, it is nothing more than a mechanism of destruction that cyclically generates crises, wars, and famines, whether it is managed by governments that claim to uphold democracy and liberalism, or by openly dictatorial, totalitarian, theocratic, or falsely "communist" regimes. The urgent need of capitalists worldwide is to postpone the catastrophe of their mode of production, based on commodity production and wage labor, which is becoming increasingly absurd, irrational, and archaic.

Capitalism is objectively under pressure from communism, a necessity that stems not from a moral ideal but from a historically mature reality. Thus, its sole common enemy—transcending the opposing war fronts of the past and future—is, ultimately, the working class, which embodies within itself—albeit unconsciously—Communism and the political revolution that paves the way for it. Only the proletariat is the force capable of providing a progressive, rather than reactionary, solution to the crisis of war.

The international and powerful working class can stop the war, turn it into a class war to establish Communism, along a path that begins by fighting to defend wages and living and working conditions and culminates in revolution, turning the weapons that the bourgeoisie will place in the hands of the workers, to send them to the slaughter in the imperialist war, no longer against their proletarian brothers of another country but against their own bourgeois regime, according to the communist slogans of all time:

- The enemy of the workers is in their own country!
- The proletarians have no homeland!
- Proletarians of all countries, unite!
- Workers of the world, unite!

The proletariat's class struggle is directed against its own bourgeoisie, which demands sacrifices and even their very lives in the name of the Fatherland—which is nothing other than the homeland of capital.

In every country today, this means, on the one hand, fighting to free the working class from the control of the regime-controlled unions that divide it, disorganize it, and hinder its struggle, and rebuilding powerful class-based unions; and, on the other hand, joining the party of the international communist revolution.

To give full expression to its great strength, the working class must arm itself with its fundamental weapons of struggle: the class-based trade union, which unites and organizes it, and the revolutionary party, which enlightens and leads it. Under communism, a global society where production is planned to meet human needs rather than for profit, work—once wage labor has been abolished—will cease to be a commodity and a source of exploitation, and social harmony will replace the productive chaos, misery, and horrors of capitalism.

FOR THE RESURGENCE OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE!

LONG LIVE RED MAY DAY!

New York City Progressives & "Socialists" Yield to Capital

When we last reported on the recent developments in TICP No. 65 with the Democratic Party courting the sewer socialist left wing, we knew this marriage could only be the continuation of the domination of the capitalist class, not a genuine challenge to them, nor a functional tactic of struggle to improve living conditions. We knew that ambitious wealth taxes and massive expansions to social programs were not to come. We knew that finance and debt creates austere limits unpassable without serious social revolt that forces the hand of the bourgeoisie, working to abolish the monetary system in its entirety. And most importantly, we knew that this political movement only serves to pacify resistance by channelling genuine worker frustration into paltry acts of voting.

Half a year has passed since leading democratic socialist Zohran Mamdani has taken office in New York City on a "tax the rich" platform, promising a general elevation of living standards through simple policy changes. If only someone had thought of this before! Life would be just peachy so long as everybody paid their fair share, right? Such are the illusions of the ahistorical, radical and arm flailing petty-bourgeoisie. Enough historical precedent has shown that no matter the pie in the sky promises offered by the moral politicians of the local level, the dictates of capital always take supreme importance. Of the most recent accomplishments celebrated by Mamdani is a somewhat surprising one: balancing the budget. This of course runs contrary to the stereotype of Keynes-esque social democracy that tends to increase spending and run on temporary budget deficits.

However, behind the façade of victory, therein lies the same death knell tendencies of overripe capitalism that exposes the house of cards Mr. Mamdani has inherited and continued to build. One only needs to look at the balance sheet to see what dark magic was performed. The balanced budget—which has not officially been passed yet—comes primarily through the infamous method of debt restructuring, meaning a renegotiation of the terms of obligations for borrowed money. This practice does not eliminate the necessity of paying interest on debt, but stealthily diffuses and delays the inevitable financial crisis that will come when debt obligations can no longer be fulfilled. In this instance, several of the payments owed to the city pension fund, which delivers the wages kept from workers during their term of employment, are being further pushed back. Ultimately, this provides immediate fiscal relief, but increases the overall necessary interest payments, thus inflating the proverbial debt bubble. The financial crisis facing not only New York City, but the whole capitalist world is not solved, but made much worse. All of this comes on top of eroding

reserve funds that have maintained the same nominal value, but have depreciated in real value due to inflation. These emergency funds are already being cut into as well, creating immense fiscal pressure. Eventually, a cataclysmic failure in the chain of worldwide debt payments will come and necessitate extreme cuts to welfare spending and immense misery. This, though, will ignite the fire of the proletariat who must sweep aside those who try and stop them. We can expect the usual cries for civility and a return to the rule of law from the bourgeoisie left, right and center. History, though, will condemn these farcical pretenders of Cato.

"But Mamdani is making people's lives better and getting things done!" cry the opportunists. Is that so? To name the promises already formally abandoned: significant property tax raises on the wealthy, rent voucher program expansion and free buses. In fact, the whole "tax the rich" plan has been completely mutilated. Mamdani's paltry increase in property tax that did manage to pass can only generate a theoretical maximum of 0.4% of the budget and can be easily avoided. The ever persistent inequality of wealth thus remains unchallenged, despite the fanfare. Even Mamdani's famous advocacy for rent control is in question as his team refuses to rule out an increase for rent-controlled apartments. Further cuts and sacrifices will likely expose themselves come the budget deadline.

Mr. Mamdani isn't distinguished here; he is merely following in the long established pattern of debt management alongside his Democratic compatriots. The goal is to methodically decrease the workers' living standards slowly à la the boiling frog in order to maintain some modicum of stability in capitalist society. Former Mayor Eric Adams chose to falsify budget expenses and directly cut funding for services. Mamdani gets his budgetary wins primarily through the state of New York's \$7.6 billion of aid (at the same time making their debt problem worse) while maintaining inadequate social services under the guise of compromise. Both are ostensibly obeying the same objective limits and function for the same goal: ensure social peace for capital accumulation.

This phenomenon stretches across the continent with another infamous mayor, this time labelled as a progressive, Brandon Johnson of Chicago. The story is the same: failed "tax the rich" legislation and insurmountable debt. So much debt in fact that the credit rating for the city of Chicago has been severely downgraded, reflecting a growing realization among financial oligarchs that the city is unable to make good on its payments. The 2026 budget for Chicago that recently passed was Mayor Johnson's last chance at introducing his financial agenda and he yet again failed to fulfill his promises. He can scream

and shout about how he was sabotaged by city aldermen, but the truth of the matter is that the bourgeoisie is not going to use its own state instruments against itself. The problem is systemic and insuperable. Ultimately, Mr. Johnson chose to accept the budget in order to prevent a government shutdown and immediate fiscal crisis. Here we see once again the interests of the heroic politician align decisively with the bourgeoisie, for in the end there was no other option when playing in their field.

The debt restructuring contained within the Chicago 2026 budget takes on a different form than New York's as Mr. Johnson and co. plan to directly borrow an additional \$1.8 billion (a 14.5% increase to the total outstanding general obligation) all while cutting public school jobs. How ironic considering Mr. Johnson's immense funding from the teachers' business union. Workers who are fooled into hitching their well-being on bourgeois politicians are left betrayed once again with nothing to fight back with but empty wallets. But wait! Extra funding is set to come in by...legalizing video poker and slot machines in every bar or restaurant with a liquor license. How civil. To save face, Mr. Johnson will take up the righteous climate fight and sue Big Oil, frantically seeking money from dubious sources like this because the wealthy are fundamentally protected. By the time this gets anywhere, Mr. Johnson will be out of office, drinking champagne and toasting to all the progress he made. Well, sir, we thank you for working in spite of yourself towards the great capitalist crisis! And for not claiming to be a socialist!

What we see in Chicago is inevitably New York City's future: credit downgrades and looming financial crisis in which the proletariat will always bear the heaviest burden. No amount of austerity, fiscal responsibility or "sound policy" can stop the chaotic tendencies of capitalism towards inevitable crises driven essentially in the field of production by falling profit rates and supply glut. These left wing mayors have integrated unions into their political machines only to give workers scraps, eventually taking them away when capital demands it, forever damning them as opportunist scoundrels. Unions are thus left as weak appendages tied into the interests of finance with no serious ability to fight back. No political movement, no matter how strong, nor wad of cash can keep a politician in check to push them into accomplishing the agenda of – mind you – their own party. And what a movement, too! Promoting any defense of democracy or electoralist tactic delivers the workers straight into the hands of the bourgeoisie. And this is exactly their purpose. The attacks on living standards will only become more acute as capitalism progresses further into crisis. Then, the workers must take (*cont pg 2*)

No Kings Protests in U.S. & Italy: All Militarism and Fascism Will be Stopped Only by the Class Struggle with Revolutionary Overthrow of Capitalism

(The following leaflet was distributed at the labor contingent rallies of the so-called "No Kings III" protests held in Italy and the United States on March 28th, 2026. The protests in-part claimed to be bringing together labor unions in opposition to the war in Iran. Thus the Party made it's presence known, not in any way to endorse such demonstrations but to intervene to put the voice of the Party in contact with the mobilized workers against that of democratic liberal opportunist leaders)

War and Fascism are not a historical accident created by mad and cruel leaders, parties, and ideologies, but the inevitable product of the historical course of capitalism, the most authentic expression of the nature of this mode of pro-

duction. Political Power does not belong to Trump, Putin, Khamenei, Netanyahu, or Xi Jinping, but to apparatuses serving the gigantic industrial and financial concentrations of capital. These apparatuses direct the National bourgeois state machines.

The War in Iran only apparently – and in the lies of the liberal-bourgeois and opportunist left – damages the capitalist economy, even if, as in any business, there are those who gain and those who lose.

Raising oil prices within certain limits benefits the US bourgeoisie, which has been the world's leading crude oil producer since 2015 and a major exporter since 2019; it benefits the Rus-

sian Russian; it also benefits the Iranian bourgeoisie—which desire the conflict—not only because to export to source to China through Hormuz, but, by decision of US imperialism, can now sell 140 millions (approximately 70 days of exports) at full price to all countries—the US—

The Increase in inflation, within certain limits, resulting from the rise in oil prices does not harm businesses, which respond by raising the prices of their products. Instead, it harms the proletariat, wage earners, the only ones who can independently decide to raise the selling price of their commodity—the workforce—but who must fight the bourgeoisie, that is, go on strike, to do so. If the increase in inflation is not excessive—so as not to excessively curb (*cont pg 2*)

New York...

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up the task not of engaging with the state, but of smashing it. Not working with the left or right, but abandoning both in favor of connecting with its sole international communist party. The active defense of the proletariat will be conducted with the revival of genuine class unions, unafraid to strike and break legal limits. Only this will demolish the objective limits imposed upon society by finance capital and monetary accounting. Com-

Labor Notes..

(continued from pg. 1)

from previous legal practice. The murder of Renee Good in the course of this enforcement campaign sharpened the urgency of the response. Organized by a coalition of liberal politicians, activist groups, and business union leadership, the action was called an "economic blackout" rather than a strike, and for good reason. While several unions signed on to lend it the appearance of a general strike, the message delivered to the rank and file was explicit: workers were not going on strike, as doing so would violate their collective bargaining agreements and break the law. Instead, individual workers were advised to call in sick or take a mental health day. Shoppers were asked to delay purchases. Business owners were asked to close voluntarily, and the coalition even provided workers with advice on how to approach "friendly" employers about shutting down for the day. The result was that whatever shutdown occurred was driven more by employers choosing to close than by workers collectively withdrawing their labor. The sole demand was for ICE to leave Minneapolis, with no class-based demands for higher wages or better conditions anywhere in sight. Workers marched alongside their friendly employers rather than against them, and the action's real function was to channel genuine working-class frustration into the electoral dead end of the Democratic Party which it accomplished. Ending in ICE and CBP leaving Minneapolis to do its work of terror elsewhere.

Class unionism and organization recognize that a strike is the most powerful weapon workers have because it cuts off the lifeblood of the ruling class: profit. This is what gives the working class the power to coerce the bosses into meeting its demands. Other elements in society such as students do not hold that power, and small businesses even less so, who as employers have antagonistic relationships to the working class.

The Labor Left and its Popular Front

The labor left embraces coalitional politics and the popular front, selling them as ways for the working class to address its problems. The popular front is an interclass political coalition built under the banner of defending democracy, in which the working class is subordinated to the leadership of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois political forces, dissolving its independent interests and demands into a broad alliance with forces hostile to those interests. Historically, the popular front has subordinated the working class's economic demands, helping mobilize it for imperialist war under the banner of defending democracy. In the 1930s, the popular front tied the working class to the democratic imperialist powers, paving the way for the Second World War and the slaughter

munism will bring with it rational production in which there will be no money and certainly no predatory borrowing between private entities. Welfare availability will be determined solely by the amount of labor-power and physical resources on hand according to an economic plan – not by cost, profit and hideous men in dark suits.

of tens of millions of workers on all sides. Today, as US imperialism wages war in Venezuela and Iran for energy dominance over its rivals, the defense of democracy against Trumpism and authoritarianism serves the same function. As the Party makes clear, the deepest purpose of imperialist war is a war against the proletariat and revolution, even before it is a war for the division of imperialist profits. Labor Notes and the labor left, chained to the Democratic Party through their popular front politics, are structurally incapable of opposing these wars. The working class mobilized today behind the banner of No Kings will be asked to die tomorrow behind the banner of democracy and the nation.

We can see this in the organizing around the enduring No Kings protests, organized by the Democratic Party-funded Indivisible and 50501 movement, calling all the good people and organizations of society together to fight evil, from churches to activist groups and beyond. With the help of Labor Notes and the regime union leadership, the working class has been mobilized for these popular front protests, calling for the defense of democracy and the rule of law, subordinating and extinguishing demands for higher wages and other class-based demands in the interest of the working class. For Labor Notes to have promoted such popular front efforts, as is common for the labor left, is to muddy the working class's struggle and mobilize its energies in the defense of bourgeois democracy rather than for demands and tactics that could truly land a blow on the ruling class: real generalized strike action, across sectors and regions, for demands that materially take from and weaken the ruling class, including higher wages and a shorter work week that unite the working class on a material basis.

The Need for a United Front from Below and the Class Union

The class union answer to the popular front is the united front from below: the combination of all workers' defensive organizations toward collective strike action, independent of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois political forces, transcending the imposed divisions of race, nationality, industry, and sector that the ruling class uses to weaken the working class. Where the popular front unites classes from above under the banner of democracy, the united front from below unites workers from below on the terrain of class struggle: workplace committees, class union committees within regime unions, workers' assemblies, strike committees, inter-factory councils, and territorial bodies linking workplaces, sectors, and

No Kings...

(continued from pg. 1)

consumption, which has been for decades declining anyway—it is good for profits, because it coincides with a de facto reduction in wages.

The war against Iran is in the interests of the US bourgeoisie, not only for increased the oil revenues, but because it fuels the Giant military-industrial apparatus of first world imperialism, strengthening the financial dominance of the dollar, and and solds up Washington's public debt. So much so that the US bourgeois regime has it taking the despite opposed opinion of the military leadership.

War for the Hegemony and the Division of the World Market their main rival – and then also against that, large importers of oil and gas, will have to raise the prices of their goods, thus made less competitive on international markets. The German and Italian bourgeoisie, which have already paid the price of the war in Ukraine, will now pay that of the war in the Middle East.

But even the European bourgeoisie are madly in love with war: they have all thrown into a Pharaonic rearmament party to new breathe in their asphyxiated manufacturing industries; German car manufacturers are converting to weapons manufacturing; two drone crashes in Cyprus were enough to justify European countries (including the Sanchez government) sending military; are they already plotting negotiation and reconstruction deals in Iran, Ukraine, and Lebanon... The same goes for Beijing's capitalist regime – China's path to the (now evident) falsification of socialism – which now the second-largest military expenditure in the world, and it continues to grow.

All national bourgeoisie desperately yearn for war as only their salvation from the advancing crisis of overproduction which is leading inexorably to the Rolling fall of the world capitalist economy.

The intertwining of imperialist affairs confirms that the conflicts between bourgeois states are far from absolute, even if – as in wars between mafia clans – leaders and followers are killed: the Russian hunch benefits from the US and Israel's war on Iran, a country with which it signed a "strategic partnership treaty" only a year ago; China has a fundamental ally in the Iranian regime, from which it purchases 90% of its oil exports, but it also is Israel's primary trading partner, and to both Israel and Iran - it sells control systems to massacre the Palestinians, the Iranian rebels, and the Iranian rebels.

regions without regard for juridical boundaries, all coordinating collective strike action against the ruling class, opposing interclass coalitions that seek to absorb and neutralize the working classes fighting energies. Unorganized and organized workers alike must come together, utilizing what they can within existing unions and forming new organs of struggle where the regime unions fail them, putting forward their own class demands for higher wages and a shorter working week. Out of this united front from below must come the forging of workplace committees, unions, and workers' organizations into a single class union encompassing all workers against the wage system.

And where do we go from here? History is instructive. The great surges of class struggle in the United States did not arise from gradual stagnation but from sharp, sudden collapses in living standards that stripped away the buffers containing struggle within reformist limits and left work-

What matters to the international bourgeoisie and its national political regimes, more than winning the division, is that the war be fought: that it devour lives, cities, factories, and surplus goods, to give new life to the asphyxiating accumulation of capital. Imperialist war, more than a war between gangs of capitalist states, is a bourgeoisie of the against the world proletariat ; It is a class war.

Further proof of this is the laughable declarations of "defense of oppressed peoples" by US imperialism, as well as the mendacious "anti-imperialism" of Washington's capitalist regimes, which only nostalgic veterans of the imposture of the false socialism of the believe USSR. The US and Israeli declarations of support for the Iranian rebels during the January demonstrations served only the Iranian regime, which was placed better to pinpoint them by intelligence with foreign forces and massacre them. The bombings since February 28th—coming after the massacre had been ongoing for two months—solidify the opposition forces around nationalism and thus the regime, which can can further internal tighten repression. Indeed, with the war, all demonstrations have ceased. The US and Iranian bourgeoisie profit from oil more than ever before. The regime change called for by the US is a change in the direction of the flow of oil revenues while keeping intact the bourgeois apparatus – founded in Iran on the Pasdaran and the Shiite clergy – which oppresses the proletariat, exactly as happened in Venezuela.

All the bourgeois states of the world First and foremost that set those up as champions of democracy, have an interest in the Iranian proletariat reform oppressed and because exploited its would revolt ignite the class struggle from Turkey to the Maghreb, passing through the Middle East, including Israel , bourgeois regime would be lacking the bogeyman with which it chains the working class to the chariot of national capitalist interests.

European imperialisms in democratic guise —Italy among the first—have done business for half a century with the bourgeois Iranian regime in its Ayatollah's robe, and will continue to do so, defying every democratic sermon recited from time to time by political bigwigs and bourgeois institutional leaders. The Murdous Cynicism of European and American Democracies shows how democracy is the guise with which these regime conceals their bourgeois nature, where Profit comes first: the democratic mask, the social and political reality is that of the Dictatorship of Cap-

ers no choice but to fight. The Pullman Strike of 1894 followed wage cuts of 30 to 40 percent in the wake of the Panic of 1893. The Great Railroad Strike of 1877 erupted after successive reductions totaling up to 50 percent during the Long Depression. The mass strikes of the 1930s emerged from drastic pay cuts and mass unemployment during the Great Depression. In each case, capitalism's crisis was abrupt enough to force workers onto the terrain of open class conflict. In the present, contemporary capitalism has managed to hedge against such a rupture through economic stabilization, credit expansion, and residual social spending, keeping accumulation afloat while preventing a decisive break toward mass class union organization. Without conditions of that severity, class unionism and class union organization can develop only to a certain degree. But that degree matters enormously. Class union forces exist today within the labor movement, organizing in and outside the regime unions, building

ital .

The liberal-bourgeois left-wing parties , which in Europe and the US present as an alternative and bulark to the right and fascism, pave the merely way: when they gain power, policies can only carry out the dictates of big capital. They disappoint workers into thinking that the solution lies in elections, within the current capitalist political framework, disorganizing and disarming them, handing them over to the most back strata who fall for fascism's populist deceptions and join the petty.

The parties of the opportunist left , who do not believe in revolution and communism, even when they declare radical or revolutionary or, faced with the unveiling of the fascism of bourgeois regimes, form a common front with the bourgeois left in "defense of democracy", heading with them failure.

The bourgeois regime simply needs to promote an ane reactionary, ruthless, and fascist right to force the bourgeois left to embrace right-wing policies. The logic is similar to that with which workers are forced to swallow worsening contract renewals by the regime's unions. " couldlt have been worse!" The liberal-bourgeois left has no political program to counter fascism, other than the one—common to the right—of managing and defending capitalism, which is headed towards economic collapse and imperialist war.

by the . In democracy the design is different: two large fish (right and left bourgeois) revolve around small fish (the proletarians) emitting large bubbles (propaganda) and locking them in them; the big third fish – the rises – below from eating small fish.

What will save the working class from war and fascism will not be the "defense of democracy," the united political front of the "anti-fascist" parties, but the struggle the class in defense of wages and living and working conditions, with a united class-based trade union front that leads increasingly widespread and long-lasting strikes, revolution until and proletarian dictatorship.

The alternative is not between democracy and fascism, between right and left, but capitalism between and communism, between war and revolution.

- Against war between states, for war between classes!
- For proletarian internationalism!
- For the communist revolution!

workplace committees, and networks of militant workers on a class union basis. The task in the present is for these forces to be built and unite, forming a class union front from below that rallies workers to the side of the class union, opposes opportunism in the labor movement from the labor left to the boss-linked leadership of the regime unions, and lays the groundwork for the future class union that will blossom when the objective crisis of capitalism demands it. Both the labor left and regime union leadership present a different look and content, but both function to channel, restrain, and subordinate the working class, preserving the ruling class's ability to accumulate capital and, when the time comes, mobilize workers to die in its imperialist wars. Against both, the united front from below must be built now.

THE IMPERIALIST WAR

Iran War: Economic Foundations of the Inter-Imperialist Clash

(This article is a report from the General Meeting of last May, #155)

A Scapegoat for the Capitalist Regime

The prevailing theory explaining the causes of the war in Iran and the Middle East is that it was the product of Trump's reckless policy, aimed not only at pursuing U.S. global dominance but at doing so in a crude, cynical, and unscrupulous manner—merely to demonstrate strength, arrogance, and oppression as an end in itself. A madman, it is constantly repeated.

Trump is said to have plunged into the conflict with Iran due to his terrible personal qualities combined with his inability to fulfill his role. He is said to have done so without a strategy, unable to extricate himself from the quagmire he has gotten himself into, thereby damaging the global economy and the U.S. economy itself.

This is what the most prominent commentators and newspapers of the international bourgeois press—from the New York Times to the Guardian to El Pais, to name a few—as well as, in every country, the parties of the bourgeois left and a large part of the opportunist left, maintain.

This is not surprising because this narrative is extremely useful to global capitalism, as it absolves it of all responsibility, mystifying the nature of both the specific Middle Eastern conflict and the global one that is brewing, and placing the blame on a single man, a particular bourgeois policy, and a single imperialist country.

We, first and foremost, assert that there is no man less free to make decisions than the leader of the world's greatest power, who is in that position because the colossal interests of the country's industrial and financial conglomerates wanted it so, and for their sake.

Trump's statements are not the result of his whims but are carefully prepared by a dedicated, sophisticated, and heavily funded apparatus. Through them, the U.S. bourgeois regime—not Trump—addresses its various interlocutors: the working class and the petty bourgeoisie within the country, the global financial markets, and both allied and enemy powers.

Power does not belong to Trump but to an apparatus that serves the dominant interests of U.S. national capitalism; it belongs to the bourgeoisie—the major industrial and financial groups—which exercises it through its state apparatus. This is the case in every capitalist country, that is, throughout the world, certainly not just in the United States.

Since capitalism is based on the accumulation of capital within corporate units, it is, for this reason, anarchic, and there are constant conflicts and clashes between the various productive and financial sectors.

This gives rise to clashes, even violent ones, within bourgeois politics, with factions of the bourgeoisie dissatisfied with the current administrators of the general interest of national capitalism, who opportunistically raise the usual arguments that always converge on the accusation that the government is failing to defend the national interest—an ideological, that is, misleading, formula with which the ruling class conceals the interests of capital, transposing onto the national level the hypocrisy that every boss employs in his company by calling it "one big family" in front of the workers!

Fascism—the real political content of bourgeois regimes in the final, supreme phase of the capitalist mode of production: imperialism—serves not only to control the working class through the subjugation and co-optation of reformist-led unions, but also to discipline the various bourgeois factions in the general interest of national capitalism.

Not only is Trump by no means free to do and say whatever he wants, but he is also not at all plagued by the problem of the midterm elections and future presidential elections—yet another piece of nonsense peddled by paid commentators around the world.

Just as the parties of the bourgeois left serve to deceive the working class, so those of the right deceive the petty bourgeoisie and the labor aristocracy.

With every election cycle, the betrayal of campaign promises plays out, generally leading to the banal outcome of an electoral victory for the previously defeated party. This is the so-called alternation of power, a mechanism useful for maintaining control over the wage-earning class, which must be convinced that it can defend its interests through the ballot box rather than through struggle. A mechanism that is clearly becoming increasingly worn out, as indicated by voter turnout data.

In reality, there are no distinct parties but rather political-business cliques of a single party—that of the national bourgeois regime—not unlike what occurs in more authoritarian regimes, such as in China, Russia, and Iran.

Trump acts on the orders of those pulling the strings behind his figurehead persona, which

serves to mask the true nature of political power, doing the dirty work for the entire ruling class that put him there.

Once he has completed his task, his "misdeeds" and bluster—which make him so "special" and behind which the idiocy of the bourgeois press and political opportunism are lost—will allow:

- on the one hand, the Democrats to return to governing the general interests of U.S. capitalism with substantial continuity with all previous administrations, just as, for example, Obama held the record for deporting undocumented immigrants, Biden supported the Israeli regime for two years in massacring 80,000 Palestinians, and all have pursued, as we will see below, U.S. supremacy in the global hydrocarbon market;
- on the other hand, the Republicans to reinvent themselves, simply by presenting a new leader in the next elections.

Trump's excesses thus serve to breathe a little more life and credibility into the electoral mechanism, slowing down its process of erosion. Increasingly reactionary political monstrosities are useful to bourgeois regimes for several reasons:

- they contribute to the formation of an increasingly barbarized political and social environment, to accustom and subjugate the working class;
- they reassure the petty bourgeoisie—terrified, hysterical, powerless—in the face of its impending fate of being relegated to the proletariat and the sub-proletariat;
- they restore the electoral system and democracy to a state of innocence, allowing the bourgeois left to recapture the illusion of a fleeting victory by calling on workers to vote against fascism.

This will continue until the Communist Party is strengthened, establishing a solid bond with the working class fighting for its immediate, basic, economic, and union-related needs.

A War Useful to U.S. Capitalism

a) Dominance in the Global Hydrocarbons Market

Along with the idea that political power belongs to the pitifully exceptional figure of a puppet in the hands of the ruling class and that the war in the Middle East is the product of its will, we must demolish another, even more pernicious notion that this political mystification brings with it.

The various bourgeois interpretations of imperialist wars share an essential characteristic: politics and economics are presented as watertight compartments.

Politics—which is supposedly afflicted by the eternal evils inherent in human nature: the lust for power, selfishness, etc.—is said to harm the capitalist economy, which, though not without its own contradictions, would supposedly shun war because it is detrimental to it.

To the common sense, this appears plausible, as non-bourgeois people experience the destruction of war as a loss for society. The reality of capitalism is inverted: destruction clears the market of the goods that had saturated it at the end of a previous historical period of capitalist accumulation, thus allowing for its recovery. Capitalism demonstrates in this way its inhuman and reactionary character.

Bourgeois ideology, therefore, seeks to keep the proletariat in a state of ignorance regarding a rudimentary conception of history that divides society into watertight compartments, so that on the one hand there would be a gradual progress of labor, the economy, and the productive forces, and on the other, the political world marked by the eternal struggle between good and evil.

Two fixed dimensions, always identical to themselves, in which no law of development can be discerned, to which one must resign oneself, and which thus sanction the inevitability of the existing political and social order.

Ultimately, unable to acknowledge its capitalist nature, war is explained by bourgeois ideology as the product of a leader's madness: Hitler, Trump, Putin, Netanyahu. To whom would stand in opposition the level-headed men of the ruling class. Madness, explaining nothing, explains everything! Just like conspiracies.

This reading of history, reduced to the level of a soap opera, is dismantled by communism by showing that war is not an event that harms the capitalist economy; it is not a rupture but rather the product of its normal functioning, as it, at a certain stage of its development, suits it—indeed, becomes indispensable.

Specifically regarding the war in Iran, we begin by showing how it does not harm but rather defends the interests of U.S. national capitalism, in its struggle for the division of global markets and profits.

A key element in understanding this assertion lies in the radical shift brought about by technology for extracting oil and gas from shale (shale oil), through horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing (fracking) of the rock.

Historically both oil producers and major net importers (imports exceeded exports), this technology has enabled the U.S. to become the world's leading producer since 2014, a net exporter of oil since 2019, and the fourth-largest oil-exporting country since 2021—behind Saudi Arabia, Russia, and Canada, and ahead of Iraq.

Since 2023, the U.S. has also become the world's leading gas producer thanks—in addition to the development of shale extraction—to investments in new liquefaction plants. The growing demand for gas has made these investments profitable, and the war in Ukraine, which began in February 2022, and the resulting sanctions on Russian oil and gas have been decisive in this regard.

It is necessary to have a clear understanding of the importance that hydrocarbon extraction has come to hold in U.S. capitalism. This is illustrated by the fact that, following the 2008 crisis, for years the United States and Germany were the only old national capitalist economies—so-called Western ones—to have reached and then surpassed their pre-crisis peak in industrial production.

But, unlike Germany, the United States was able to achieve this result only thanks to the role that shale oil extraction came to play, starting precisely in 2010: without this contribution, manufacturing output in 2024 would still have been a full 7.6% below the 2007 peak, which is, moreover, a worsening compared to the -5.5% of 2022.

It is clearly not out of context to note that Germany, just as it was regaining ground after the decline caused by the Covid pandemic—which had brought its industrial production below the 2007 peak—saw that recovery halted due to the war in Ukraine. In 2022, industrial production was 1.6% lower than in 2007, and in the three years since then, it has continued to decline.

The war in Ukraine, which has been ongoing for over four years, has dealt a severe blow to the United States' main Atlantic rival. The new war in Iran is dealing a second blow to German imperialism—and, clearly, not only to that.

Shale oil production in the U.S. rose from 0.2 million barrels per day (mb/d) in 2009 to 2.8 mb/d in 2013, to 4.2 mb/d in 2014, to a peak of 8 mb/d in 2023, and then fell to 7.2 mb/d last year (2025). In 2025, the United States exported 4 million barrels per day, 85 times more than in 2011, but slightly less than in 2023 and 2024.

The distinctive feature of shale oil is its high production cost. If the international price of oil approaches the \$60 threshold, oil profits dwindle. A price around \$80–90 per barrel guarantees good profits, and around \$100–110 encourages investment and expansion of production.

As early as April of last year, bourgeois economists had predicted a drop in oil prices for the current year—reflecting a decline in demand and thus presumably a worsening of the overproduction crisis—which would have exacerbated the decline in U.S. oil production already underway since 2024. Steel production in China—which in 2023 accounted for 54% of global steel production and is the world's largest oil importer—has been declining for two years.

The war in Iran, which began on February 28—with the blockade of maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz first imposed by Iran starting March 1, and then with the counter-blockade imposed by the United States starting April 20—has led to an average price from April to the present of \$100 per barrel, compared to an average price of \$77 per barrel over the past six months.

This benefits not only oil and gas extraction but also the production of refined products (gasoline, diesel, kerosene...), which has already reached maximum production capacity in the U.S. A record number of oil tankers, gas carriers, and chemical tankers are crossing the oceans to and from U.S. ports. Gas that Italy, for example, used to purchase primarily from Qatar has largely been replaced with gas purchased from the United States. Edison, holder of Italy's largest gas supply contract with Qatar, announced in mid-April that it had already managed to replace 7 of the 10 shipments that Doha was supposed to send between April and June. Six out of seven of these shipments now come from the United States.

The same is true for several countries in the Far East, which were major buyers of oil and gas from the Persian Gulf.

It is clear that, from the perspective of the oil industry—which, as we have seen, plays a very important role in U.S. capitalism—the so-called "quagmire" into which Trump's folly was said to have dragged the country is, in fact, a paradise of profits!

There is also the relative advantage over competitors in the division of world markets. While the U.S., as the world's leading oil producer, benefits from an oil price of around \$100 per barrel, countries that are major importers, such as Germany and China, can only suffer as a result.

Although China has invested heavily in the production of renewable energy technologies and electric vehicles, and has diversified its sources of hydrocarbon supply, more than 60% of its electricity consumption still depends on fossil fuels, and approximately 16% of its oil imports come from the Persian Gulf.

b) For the financial dominance of the dollar

The second factor closely linked to the extraction, refining, and export of hydrocarbons is the United States' massive public debt.

The growth of public debt is in itself merely a reflection of the growth of the capital stock, of capitalist accumulation. What is revealing of capital's difficulty in accumulating, however, is the rising ratio of public debt to GDP. For the U.S., this ratio was 33.1% in 2001, 103.3% in 2014, and 123.3% in 2024.

A sudden increase, which is very dangerous in the long run, but which for now remains at a sustainable level, considering that a much weaker form of capitalism like Italy's has a public debt-to-GDP ratio of around 135%, which has remained at this level for about a decade, while Japan's is as high as 230%.

To maintain the U.S. public debt, it is necessary to finance the dollar as the international currency of exchange, as this offers a guarantee of strength and stability and thus makes the sale of U.S. Treasury bonds (treasuries) attractive.

Given that between 80% and 90% of hydrocarbons are purchased in dollars—excluding those subject to U.S.-imposed sanctions, such as Russian and Iranian gas and oil—the rise in prices implies not only increased oil revenues for major U.S. companies but also greater use and demand for the dollar on the international market, thereby strengthening it as an international currency and ultimately bolstering U.S. public debt.

The dollar's role as an international currency of exchange was secured by the United States through its military victory in World War II, which cemented the industrial and financial superiority of that form of capitalism—then at the height of its power—replacing the pound sterling.

In 1944, the United States produced 40% of the world's armaments. By the end of the war, with 6% of the world's population, it accounted for nearly half of global production, held more than 50% of the world's gold reserves, controlled 52% of the merchant fleet, and enjoyed technological leadership in nearly every sector.

This power has been in decline for decades, threatened, as is well known, by China's industrial might, the world's leading manufacturing nation, accounting for over 30% of global manufacturing output. But the economic superiority enjoyed by the United States at the end of World War II is not even comparable to that enjoyed today by Chinese imperialism, which, though the world's leading manufacturer, operates within a world that has fully embraced the capitalist mode of production, with a plurality of competing medium- and large-scale capitalist powers, starting with India.

Furthermore, U.S. national capitalism, struggling against its inexorable decline, clashes with Chinese capitalism, which, however, it is erroneous to still consider "young" and is instead correct to define as already fully mature, having itself been afflicted for several years by a full-blown crisis of overproduction. China has gone from a public debt-to-GDP ratio of 39.3% in 2014 to nearly 90% in 2025.

Nevertheless, the industrial superiority of Chinese imperialism inevitably tends to erode U.S. financial dominance and, with it, the role of the dollar, undermining the sustainability of Washington's national debt.

The sharp increase in U.S. exports of oil, gas, and refined products serves to slow this process.

Thus, while it is true that military intervention in the Middle East comes at a high cost to the U.S.—which operates the world's largest military fleet—this is an investment of primary importance for this national capitalism.

This leads to the third factor for which war serves U.S. capitalism.

c) For the War Industry

The U.S. military is the largest in the world, and the defense industry clearly plays a major role within the industrial complex of the world's leading imperialist power. The United States is also the world's leading arms exporter, accounting for a full 40% of global exports.

For them, war is a massive public investment in the enormous national war-making industrial apparatus. It also serves, for this purpose, as a crucial test bed for weapons, weapon systems, and the armed forces—navy, air force, and army—as a whole, as well as for the research and development system, which then trickles down to the civilian sector.

Far from being uneconomical, therefore, the war waged by the United States in Iran, with the aid of its Israeli vassal state, on the one hand represents a massive public investment that, to use the bourgeois economic terminology dear to the left, serves an anti-cyclical function—that is, countering a recession already underway—and on the other hand partially shifts the effects of the overproduction crisis onto European and Asian

China. Between 40% and 50% of government revenue comes from hydrocarbon exports, which account for 70% of the country's total exports. An extreme vulnerability.

In recent years, as sanctions have been intensified, Iran has been able to export oil through a so-called "shadow fleet," but has had to sell it at a reduced price, similar to what is happening in Russia, about \$10 per barrel below the market price.

In theory, the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz should be a noose tightening rapidly around the Iranian regime's neck, while U.S. imperialist benefits from an oil price hovering around \$100 per barrel. However, it is unclear how effective the U.S. blockade actually is against the ships of Iran's shadow fleet, which turn off their transponders (radio systems) and are undetectable by standard civilian vessel-tracking systems.

The U.S. blockade targets vessels traveling to and from Iranian ports. Iraq, for example, is reported to have signed an agreement with Iran, paying a fee to the bourgeois regime in Tehran to allow ships departing from its two ports of Basra and Umm Qasr to pass through. These are vessels that the U.S. Navy does not block and on which Iranian oil could be transported by sea. It cannot even be ruled out that a portion of oil tankers might pass through the Strait and reach China even with U.S. consent, amid a context of pressure, showdowns, and negotiations. In any case, the blockade is unlikely to be total.

Furthermore, the quantity of Iranian oil already at sea must be taken into account. In the months leading up to the conflict, the Iranian regime, anticipating the attack, had significantly increased shipments and exports, reaching 3 million barrels per day. When, on March 20, the United States announced a one-month suspension of sanctions on Iranian oil—which was not renewed, as it was superseded on April 13 by blockade of ships to and from Iranian ports in the waters of the Arabian Sea, near the Gulf of Oman—it was estimated that 170 million barrels were at sea, equivalent to about two and a half months of exports at the 2025 rate and roughly 80 very large crude carriers (VLCCs). Two months have passed since then.

The United States and Israel could easily strike the island of Kharg, bringing the country to its knees for years. But the Iranian regime threatens to strike oil infrastructure in the Gulf countries—pipelines, gas pipelines, refineries, ports—to obstruct, including through the Houthis, navigation through the Bab el Mandeb Strait, through which 10% of global maritime trade passes, as occurred in December 2023 and January 2024, and to cut the undersea internet cables that run through the Strait of Hormuz.

The escalation of the conflict, should even just a portion of these threats materialize, would lead to a further rise in hydrocarbon prices and inflation, sufficient to nullify the positive economic effects for U.S. imperialism.

Taken together, these factors reveal just how false the claim is that the current U.S. administration lacks a strategy. The strikes against the Venezuelan regime in early January and against Iran two months later is part of the objective of ensuring a growing dominant role for the U.S. oil industry in the world market, thereby strengthening the financial dominance of the leading global imperialist power and making its enormous military expenditures—necessary to secure such conditions—sustainable.

The Subaltern Imperialism of the Israeli Bourgeoisie

From the public lecture held in Portland on April 11

We hear endlessly that the State of Israel is dragging America into the conflict, that Netanyahu is manipulating Washington, that the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) has bought Congress, that this is Israel's war and America is being beaten along. This is everywhere: in the liberal press, in the anti-war movement, and in some sectors of the "left."

But it's fundamentally flawed. Not because the lobby is imaginary or Netanyahu lacks goals. It's flashed because it confuses the instrument with the creator. It allows Washington to hide behind Tel Aviv. We need to start not with ideology, but with economics, with the movement of capital.

The United States has provided military aid to the State of Israel since 1949, but only modest amounts until the 1973 war, when aid increased by a magnitude of order, reaching, \$3 billion a year, a figure that has remained ever since. By 2009, virtually all aid was military, and civil aid was eliminated. The United States is not funding Israeli society. It is acquiring a military role in the region.

But aid isn't money. It's vouchers that can only be off at American arms manufacturers: Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, Boeing, General Dynamics. The State of Israel is required to spend the aid in the United States. Every dollar goes back to American arms capital. Even the uniforms and combat rations that could be produced in Israel are purchased by American companies because the vouchers must be off there. So when we hear that the American government gives Israel three billion a year, we should understand: it gives three billion a year to its own arms industry and ships the product to a client state. In real terms, adjusted for inflation, aid peaked in 1979 and by 2010 had failed to fifth about a America pays less while demanding more.

In 2016, the Obama administration signed a ten-year agreement with Israel that granted it the privilege of spending a portion of the aid on its military industry, a privilege no other country has ever enjoyed. However, the agreement prevented Israel from requesting further funding from Congress for its entire duration. Israel, but not on an equal footing; the terms are subordinate.

Subordination has been proven many times. In the 1980s, Israel to attempt build its own fighter jet—the Lavi—a direct competitor to American aircraft: a bid for military-industrial independence. The United States scuttled the project. They are delayed technology licensing, a Pentagon report that inflated cost estimates by 40 percent, insisted on a veto on sales to third parties, and finally offered competing American systems for free as "aid." The project failed. Thousands of workers lost their jobs. And the entire Israeli arms industry was restructured around a new division of labor: the United States monopolizes combat platforms—tanks, jets, warships—while Israel produces only complementary components. Helmet displays for the F-15. Navigation systems for the F-16. Targeting optics. Parts that fit into American equipment and compete with none.

AIPAC nor the neoconservatives saved Lavi. When the interests of Israeli capital actually clashed with those of American capital, Israel caved. Every time.

Excluded from the competition for basic weapons, Israel has carved out a niche for itself: the technology of repression. Surveillance systems, biometric identification, automated checkpoints, perimorial defense, and riot control—all developed through decades of military occupation, tested on a captive Palestinian population, and then marketed globally as "combat-proven." After 9/11, this niche exploded.

Netanyahu said the attacks were "good for Israel"—because the global war on terror has opened up a huge market for the very products Israeli were companies selling already. Eighty percent of Israeli arms production is exported, four times the American rate. In 2012, nearly 5 percent of the Israeli workforce depended on the arms industry—a third of the industrial sector. The military occupation of Palestinian territory is not separate from the Israeli economy. It is the engine of its most sector. Every bombing campaign is a demonstration product. Every war is a trade show.

The occupation costs the Israeli state more than it receives in American aid—that threshold was crossed around 1999. Security costs, fueled by Palestinian resistance, are nearly triple those of settle subsidies. Israeli poverty is rising, schools

The U.S. strike against Iran clearly has nothing to do with the nature of that regime and, ultimately, has little to do with the specific capitalist interests of the Iranian bourgeoisie. By striking Iran, the United States has reduced competition in the oil market from the Persian Gulf petromonarchies, dealt a second blow to the European imperialist powers—major importers of hydrocarbons, first and foremost Germany—and choked off the main oil and gas supply route of its primary global imperialist rival, China, for which 45–50% of oil imports and nearly 30% of gas imports pass through the Strait of Hormuz.

In the specific Middle Eastern context, the conflict plays on the rivalries between Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE and further strengthens Israel against its rival regional power, Iran, to the point that for months now, several commentators have been pointing to Turkish imperialism as the new main rival to Israeli imperialism.

Chinese imperialism, which possesses a large amount of strategic oil reserves, appears for now to have responded to the Hormuz blockade by drastically reducing oil and gas imports. As the world's leading importer of hydrocarbons, this has been a factor in keeping prices within certain limits, allowing the Chinese capitalist giant to spend less.

At the same time, it is important to note that U.S. gas exports to China, which had peaked at 4 billion tons per year in 2020, fell to 3.6 billion tons per year in 2021, 2.1 billion tons per year in 2022, 0.5 billion tons per year in 2023, and to zero starting in 2024.

A War Against the Struggle of the Iranian Proletariat

While the strategy of U.S. imperialism is coherent and discernible, what appears entirely inconsistent is the propaganda used to justify the attack on the Iranian bourgeois regime.

Since the days of the January uprising, the U.S. administration has issued repeated statements of support for the protesters, claiming it would intervene militarily to defend them from the regime that, in the meantime, was killing them by the thousands.

The military intervention by the U.S. and Israel finally arrived on February 28, more than a month after the bloody repression had taken place. Perhaps they were afraid that, by intervening sooner, the uprising might actually succeed!

Furthermore, the United States and several other bourgeois regimes and right-wing parties (in Italy, the majority ruling party) have heavily funded and openly supported the son of the last Shah deposed in 1979, Reza Pahlavi, as an alternative to the Ayatollahs' regime, setting up a movement called MIGA – Make Iran Great Again—which was very aggressive toward other Iranian political forces, especially those on the left, present at demonstrations by Iranian communities abroad, and which openly called for U.S. military intervention. The climax of this movement was the demonstration of 100,000 people in Munich on February 14.

As stated in our repeated positions, through international leaflets and articles, the proclamations of support for the rebels by the United States and Israel only helped the Iranian regime, which was thus able to more easily discredit and repress the uprising by portraying it as a tool of hostile foreign powers; just as military intervention has

are declining, social services are being dismantled. But arms companies are booming. The costs are socialized, distributed across the Israeli and American working classes. Profits are privatized in arms capital, security companies, and the broader circuits of international finance. Wars in the Middle East have been shown to increase the assessment of profits of oil and arms companies globally—not just Israeli ones.

Occupation breeds permanent instability. Instability drives up oil prices. Instability increases the demand for weapons. The Palestinian question remains unresolved not because no one can solve it, but it because insolvability is profitable.

This is the structure. And within this structure, the lobby performs a real but secondary function. Let's not deny AIPAC's power. It can mobilize seventy Senate signatures in a day. It channels campaign funds through dozens of "Political Action Committees." It shapes opinion and silences critics. All documented. But the claim that the lobby dictates American policy rather than serves it inverts cause and effect. The lobby is successful because its agenda aligns with what major sectors of American capital already demand. The argument that Israel is a "strategic liability" only holds if we ask: liability for whom? For arms manufacturers, oil companies, and the homeland security sector, the relationship is enormously profitable. The liability falls on American workers and taxpayers—but their interests have never been those served by bourgeois foreign policy. This is not a distortion of the national interest. It is the normal functioning of imperialism, where costs are socialized and profits privatized.

And we note that those who most vociferously support the lobby's argument, when pressed on what they actually propose, don't call for an end to American domination of the Middle East. They demand what they call "foreign balance": control of Persian Gulf oil with fewer troops on the ground. A more efficient imperialism.

It must also be clear that we reject any conspiratorial interpretation. Our party's analysis of the "Jewish question" has always been clear: there they have always been rich Jews and poor Jews, just as there are bourgeois and proletarians of every nationality. The generalization that attributes to an entire people the characteristics of its ruling class—or worse, of a dark clique directing world events—is the oldest epidemic of reactionary ideology. It has been used against Jews for centuries. Today it is used against Arabs, against Muslims against, every population that imperialism needs to demonize. We do not combat this generalization with sentimental appeals or liberal moralism. We combat it with class analysis. The Israeli bourgeoisie exploits Israeli workers. The Palestinian bourgeoisie, wearing to Fatah or Hamas badge, exploits Palestinian workers. American capital exploits them all. The issue is not about peoples, races, or religions. The issue is, as always, about class.

Let's see this in the current war. The United States is not bombing Iran because Netanyahu asked for it. The United States is bombing Iran because Iran is the last major obstacle to America's unchallenged hegemony over the Persian Gulf energy corridor, through which a fifth of the world's oil passes. Because Gulf oil, taken off the market, raises prices to the ideal level for American producers. Because this war has already led to the construction of the first new American refinery in half a century.

When Netanyahu appears to be leading—when Israel strikes first, when Israeli intelligence identifies targets—what we see is the sub-imperial executive arm enthusiastically carrying out its function. Not the servant who commands the master, but the servant who demonstrates his usefulness so that the paycheck keeps coming.

Every time someone points the finger at Netanyahu and says he's dragging America into this war, they're doing American capital a disservice. They allow Washington to hide behind its own tool. They allow the architects of the war to escape reproach and condemnation.

This confusion isn't theoretical. It's happening right now, in the midst of this war. Three weeks ago, Joe Kent—the director of Trump's National Counterterrorism Center, a Green Beret with eleven combat tours under his belt, the husband of a Gold Star, and a well-known MAGA devotee—resigned in protest. In his resignation letter, he claimed that Iran posed no imminent threat, that the war had been started "due to pressure from Israel and its powerful American lobby," and that Israel had used "the same tactics" it used to drag

blocked any resurgence of the working-class struggle and protests by other social strata, uniting the bourgeois political opposition around the regime.

The war has also put an end to the demonstrations in support of the Iranian monarchy, which had so fervently called for it.

Pahlavi seems to have met a fate similar to that of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Maria Corina Machado, who was used by Trump to fuel propaganda against the Venezuelan regime and then cast aside in favor of leading figures of the "Bolivarian socialism" regime—starting with the new president, Delcy Rodríguez: former minister of foreign affairs, economy, and hydrocarbons—who turned on her heel within a day without any of the 5 million bayonets invoked by Maduro firing a single shot in her defense.

In the aftermath of Ayatollah Khamenei's assassination, in fact, Trump declared that he wanted a say in who his successor should be. Beyond the usual arrogance typically displayed in such a statement, the substantive shift it implied was the abandonment of the previous propagandistic stance—calling for the destruction of the Shiite theocratic regime—and its replacement with the more pragmatic goal of a mere internal change within the regime. Exactly the opposite of what was done in Venezuela.

The value of the proclamations in defense of democracy by the U.S. administration and those in defense of socialism by the Venezuelan regime have shown identical consistency!

Military intervention, far from reinvigorating the struggle movement within Iran—and indeed, by establishing a social and political climate of wartime emergency—fostered repression through dozens of executions and hundreds of arrests, and within the ranks of the bourgeois regime, it has favored the factions most closely tied to the military apparatus—namely, the Pasdaran—who control an ever-growing portion of the country's capitalist economy.

It is confirmed once again that capitalist, imperialist war is the most valuable weapon of bourgeois regimes against the class struggle, precisely when, due to the objectively degrading social conditions, the struggle shows signs of its inevitable eruption.

The uprising of the Iranian proletariat is a threat to the bourgeoisies throughout the Middle East, because it risks spreading and mobilizing the proletarian masses in neighboring Arab countries. The spread of the class struggle across national borders is by no means a remote possibility, as the so-called Arab Spring of 2010–2011 demonstrated.

It is also a threat to the Israeli bourgeoisie, which, if the Ayatollahs' regime were to collapse at the hands of the working-class struggle, would see the specter of the external enemy—with which it disciplines its wage-earning class—vanish.

War has come to the rescue, yes, but of the bourgeois regime in Ayatollah's robes, against the Iranian proletariat and that of the entire Middle East.

Imperialist war, false anti-imperialism, proletarian revolution

We have seen how, through war, U.S. imperialism seeks to gain an advantage over its competitors by shifting the bulk of the burden of the advancing crisis of overproduction onto them—a fundamental point not to be overlooked—a cri-

sis that grips them all.

Chinese imperialism, which is the prime candidate to wrest global profit dominance from the United States—just as the latter did with Britain—is no less beset by the crisis, and we have already seen it showing clear signs of premature aging, which we will recapitulate. The recent real estate crisis, a manifestation of speculation that arises when capitalist accumulation stalls; the sudden rise in the public debt-to-GDP ratio; and the decline in industrial production to the point that the country has experienced an almost deflationary condition over the past three years—these are unequivocal indicators of this trend.

To find an outlet for its excess capital, Chinese imperialism must become increasingly invasive and aggressive, first economically, then militarily, on the international stage. This leads to an inevitable clash with rival imperialisms over the division of the world, primarily with that of Washington.

It is therefore unforgivably naive, if not a supreme piece of trickery, to present the imperialist conflict unfolding before our eyes—the third in just over a century—as the responsibility of only one side of the capitalist powers, hiding behind the fact that the United States is waging preventive wars within the framework of this general clash.

It is the usual petty trick of blaming the war on the side that strikes first, in order to hide how it develops and springs from the economic and political system as a whole, which ultimately has an absolute need for war.

In fact, for U.S. imperialism, attacking Venezuela, Iran, and tomorrow Cuba and Greenland serves to gain positions of strength in view of the general clash into which all world powers know they must and want to throw themselves—and, above all, throw the proletariat.

The true enemy of the entire bourgeoisie, in fact—far more than the ruling classes of rival countries—is the economic crisis and the social revolution it implies: it is the threat of proletarian revolution.

All bourgeois regimes, from the democratic ones to those more or less openly authoritarian, from those in Islamic garb to those painted red to usurp the name of socialism, are rearming themselves in anticipation of the clash in which to destroy the immense stockpile of goods that increasingly suffocates the markets, preventing the further accumulation of capital, and in which to send the proletariat to a fratricidal slaughter with their class brothers in other countries, in the interest of the capitalists masked as national interest.

In this endeavor, the bourgeoisie is aided by the parties of the bourgeois and opportunist left, which endorse the idea of an eternal struggle of the oppressed nations against the oppressor. This is the ideological framework used by Mussolini when he pitted the proletarian nations against the "demo-pluto-Jewish" ones. The goal would no longer be the overcoming of capitalism—socialism—but the peaceful coexistence of capitalist states. Or at most, the military defeat of the oppressive capitalist states, identified as the sole imperialist powers, would be a necessary step before the struggle for socialism could begin. This struggle of capitalist states that exploit hundreds of millions of proletarians and poor peasants against other capitalist states that do the same but which, due to historical circumstances, are at that particular historical moment superior in power, is presented as an anti-imperialist struggle. Imperialism,

The Sudanese Civil War and Developing Ethiopian Imperialism's Thirst for Water Dominance

As we have written about previously in TICP no. 67, the ongoing Third Sudanese Civil War of 2023 to the present has torn the struggling country to shreds and killed workers in droves, currently estimated to have claimed between 150,000 and 400,000 victims. In the eastern state of Darfur, vicious and bloody combat between the government of the Republic of the Sudan under President Abdel Fattah al-Burhan Abdelrahman al-Burhan, commonly referred to as the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), and the quasi-state Government of Peace and Unity under the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary led by Muhammad Hamdan Dagalo Musa, or "Hemedti," remains ongoing, with no end in sight. As of May, both rival governments are now funded and armed by multiple foreign governments and bolstered by mercenary groups: Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, and both Ukraine and, increasingly, Russia have taken to backing the SAF, while the United Arab Emirates, Chad, Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, and Libya's eastern Government of National Stability are supporting the RSF. Domestic irregular militias and mercenaries from Russia's Wagner Group and Colombia's Desert Wolves have also been noted as combatants, many of them hired by the UAE. The war is blatantly and nakedly one for capital; many of both governments' backers have hedged on which proxy to side with based entirely on the material wealth of Sudan they will be granted access to in the case of their victory, whether it is Russia's desire to secure access to the SAF's Port Sudan on the Red Sea, or the UAE's access to the RSF's valuable gold mines.

Between late 2025 and the present, the siege and capture of the city of El Fasher, the SAF's return to devastated Khartoum, and the ramping-up of combat in the Kordofan region has allowed a microcosmic look into the apocalyptic horror of modern warfare, with the RSF killing over 60,000 fleeing Sudanese men, women, and children in El Fasher alone as a part of its campaign of ethnic cleansing. Economically, the war has been utterly abysmal for the struggling state; GDP collapsed by a staggering \$6.4 billion in the war's first year, and by 2026, about \$26 billion has been lost to the fighting. Industrial and agricultural production and oil extraction have fallen catastrophically and millions of Sudanese proletarians experience extreme poverty and homelessness, food and clean water scarcity, rolling blackouts, conscription, and outright mass killings on a regular basis. A humanitarian crisis has engulfed north and east Africa as millions of Sudanese workers, unable to use their financial and material wealth to easily escape the conflict, have fled to neighboring states and into overcrowded and resource-deprived refugee camps to avoid the sheer depravity of modern warfare.

Recently, the war has begun a more egregious period of spillover into the neighboring Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia under Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali and the State of Eritrea under President Isaias Afwerki, both of which have their economic and military hands in the ongoing conflict. Ethiopia and Eritrea, which have thrown support into the RSF and SAF respectively, have provided military aid in the form of militia armaments, drone attacks, training camps, and even direct military deployment. Eritrea currently hosts about 5,000 soldiers in Sudan, used to guard bridges and other strategic chokepoints and to support the SAF as it combats the RSF in Kassala and Gedaref, and Sudan has accused Ethiopia of allowing drone swarms to strike military targets in the Blue Nile State. Eritrea currently arms multiple anti-RSF militias such as the Eastern Cohort, the Eastern Sudan Liberation Force, and the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM-Minnawi), while Ethiopia transports military equipment, including armored personnel carriers (APCs), from the port of Berbera into RSF territory. Both countries maintain training centers to arm and prepare militias for their respective sides, exacerbating the war and providing a picture of a much larger and more cataclysmic conflict that is yet to come.

The Sudanese war cannot no longer be analyzed in isolation, for it is rapidly merging with a much broader hydropolitical rupture along the entire Nile River Basin. On September 9th, 2025, after roughly fourteen years of construction, Ethiopia inaugurated the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) on the Blue Nile, and in February 2026 the Ethiopian government confirmed the full completion of the dam. With an installed capacity of 5.15 gigawatts, as of May, GERD is the largest hydroelectric power plant in Africa and number seventeen of the twenty largest in the world, holding back a reservoir whose volume is roughly 1.5 times the annual flow of the Blue Nile at the Sudanese border. To the Ethiopian bourgeoisie, the dam is the centerpiece of an export-oriented strategy of regional electrical hegemony, intended to bind Sudan, South Sudan, Djibouti, and Kenya to Addis Ababa as customers and to vault Ethiopian capital into a position of regional dominance. To President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and the bourgeoisie of Egypt, fully dependent on the extraction of approximately 98% of its renewable water resources from the Nile, the GERD is treated as an existential menace, a unilateral act undermining the 1959 Nile Waters Agreement which carved up the river between Cairo and Khartoum and excluded the upstream states entirely.

The Egyptian response has been the system-

which Lenin explains is the final stage of capitalism's development, is reduced to a characteristic specific to only a few countries, not to a mode of production that envelops the entire planet in an inextricable web of economic relations. The clash between dominant imperialist powers and imperialist powers seeking to displace them in the division of global profits is presented as an anti-imperialist and anti-colonial struggle.

Bourgeois states, entirely at the service of the most ruthless capitalist accumulation carried out through the exploitation of the proletarians living within them, are adorned with the label of anti-imperialist forces simply because they clash militarily with the currently dominant imperialist power. They no longer even need to pretend to be socialists, as is the case with China, but a regime like Iran's is also perfectly acceptable—a regime that, by its own admission, suppressed over 3,000 demonstrators in the streets over the course of about ten days last January.

The concept of anti-colonial struggle, which for Marxism was situated within the class struggle during the transitional period of certain countries and geo-historical areas from pre-capitalist modes of production to capitalism, has been stripped by moribund opportunism of any connection to the class struggle and socialism and filled with bourgeois ideological preconceptions, rendered—as they preach—eternal.

It goes without saying that the proletariat of all countries in the world has no friends either in so-called Western imperialism or in those who claim to be the bearers of a world of peace and respect for international law, and who merely aspire to replace the former in their dominant and privileged position in international markets.

The working class can stop the imperialist war that is brewing and advancing by refusing to take sides on its fronts, denouncing them all as bourgeois and its enemies. Imperialism is fought through class struggle, not through war between states. It is fought through the international unity of the working class, which, in practice, is achieved by placing the struggle against one's own national bourgeoisie above all else, never showing solidarity with it against a so-called foreign power. The foreign power that oppresses the world proletariat is capitalism.

Until the working class seizes political power within a country by wresting it from the bourgeoisie through revolution and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat, it must refuse to shed blood in wars between imperialist powers for the benefit of its own bourgeoisie. As long as power lies with the bourgeoisie, the sooner one's own country is defeated in war, the less proletarian blood will be shed. Until power is seized by the proletariat, the only struggle to be waged, the only blood workers must accept shedding, is that of the class struggle.

In Iran, too, workers must organize themselves into unions independent of the bourgeois regime—class-based unions—that center their organization around territorial structures, to unite workers across corporate divisions, and to fight through ever-larger strikes for their immediate interests: wage and pension increases, a reduction in the workday, and full pay for laid-off workers. The International Communist Party points to the vital role of this elementary, economic, trade-union class struggle. Its intensification, together with the strengthening of our party within the ranks of the proletarian class and in class-based trade union organizations, leads the movement to rise to the political level, to the struggle for power, to revolution.

The Hell of the Congo: The Macabre Dance of Bourgeois Gangs and Imperialisms Amidst Scenes of War and Workers' Blood.

In a context of increasingly widespread and permanent wars, while all states in all latitudes prepare for the third world carnage, the capitalist mode of production, whose class dictatorship knows no geographical boundaries, shows its true nature everywhere.

While on the one hand current war scenarios reveal the staging of "great men"—the Trumps, the Putins, the Iranian priests—offering them up to public contempt behind the screen of individual responsibilities to hide their own class nature, on the other hand, in the peripheries of the world, where names remain ignored, the destructive force of Capital continues to act immutably and impersonally: an infernal machine that systematically transforms the massacre of entire generations and the devastation of territories into surplus value.

A prime example of this is the scenario emer-

ging in the large Central African state of Congo, where it is estimated that nearly 6 million people have died in the last 30 years due to an endless internal war between bourgeois gangs.

Despite the mining sector's multi-billion dollar value, in Congo more than 70% of the population still lives on less than \$2.15 a day. The metropolis of Kinshasa grows unchecked, a concentration of reserve labor, a mass of people displaced from war-torn countryside, waiting for war.

The Mines

It is necessary to focus on the country's precious—for capital—extractive sector, where, in

the ongoing tragedy of the mines, proletarian blood is spilled daily to feed capital's hunger for raw materials. Even beneath the veneer of modern technology, often painted green, ecological, digital, and responsible, beats the ferocious heart of the perpetual exploitation of man by man. The extractive sector of the Democratic Republic of Congo is one of the most important in the world, both in terms of its current and potential value and its strategic significance, representing the backbone of the national economy. It generates, in fact, more than 95% of export revenues. The value of untapped mineral resources exceeds \$24 trillion, a truly irresistible prize for bourgeois predators.

China is its primary destination, receiving over 70% of total exports. Almost all raw or partially refined copper and cobalt is (*cont pg 4*)

mercial Bank, and a constellation of Gulf institutions have already positioned themselves for entry, and the ESX itself counts the Nigerian Exchange Group among its institutional shareholders. The birr has been floated, foreign exchange restrictions loosened, and the sovereign debt restructured under the G20 Common Framework, each measure binding the Ethiopian state and proletariat ever more tightly to the disciplinary mechanisms of the IMF, the World Bank, and the international bond market. For the bourgeois press, these reforms herald a long-overdue maturation, the emergence of a "frontier market" rich with "untapped potential;" for our analysis, they are the textbook signature of imperialism, the export of capital rather than merely commodities, the fusion of industrial and banking capital into financial oligarchies seeking new fields of exploitation, and the territorial partition of the Horn by competing fractions of an internationalized bourgeoisie, of which its Ethiopian segment is a junior aspirant.

Above the fray of regional imperialisms, the great powers conduct their deals for influence and control. In a January 16th, 2026 letter to el-Sisi, U.S. President Donald Trump pledged to restart American mediation in the GERD dispute, an offer Cairo welcomed and Ethiopia has so far stewalled, regarding the dam's inauguration as a fait accompli. In mid-February 2026, UAE state-owned newspaper The National broke a story of an Egyptian proposal granting Ethiopia Red Sea access in exchange for binding concessions on dam filling and water releases. Egypt formally denied this proposal days later, but it carries the implicit threat that Cairo's relationships with Sudan, Somalia, and Djibouti could just as easily obstruct that access. Russia, having extracted its naval foothold at Port Sudan from the SAF, watches with interest. The fragmentation of the American hegemony, the open failure of the African Union and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD); the fractious war between Yemen's Saudi-backed Presidential Leadership Council (PLC) and the Iran-backed Houthis/Ansar Allah faction; the recurring Iranian crisis; and the spillover from the Red Sea and Bab el-Mandeb together signal the fragmentation of the Horn into a zone of permanent armed competition.

The water itself is dwindling. Climate variability, accelerating evaporation at the Egyptian city of Aswan, soil salinization in the Nile delta, and population growth in every basin state ensure that the volume in dispute shrinks every year while the number of mouths and turbines competing for it grows. Every major watercourse from the Sahel to the Indian Ocean, including the Awash, Juba, Shebelle, and Tekezé Rivers, and most prominently the Nile itself, is slowly succumbing to all of the grotesque political weaponization expected of a capitalist mode of production which precipitates exploitation above all. Within perhaps ten or so years, on present trajectories, the Egyptian, Sudanese, Ethiopian, Eritrean, Somali, and South Sudanese bourgeoisies, with their respective imperialist patrons in Washington, Moscow, Abu Dhabi, Riyadh, Ankara, and Beijing, will be slowly but surely drawn into a series of overlapping proxy conflicts, and perhaps even a single interlocking war if conditions arise, over hydraulic

ic infrastructure, port access, and pipeline corridors that will dwarf the carnage already visited upon the ravaged Sudanese proletariat.

The communist analysis of these developments must begin by refusing every category in which the bourgeois press and the diplomatic chanceries clothe them. There is no "Egyptian water security" to be defended, no "Ethiopian sovereign development" to be celebrated, no "Eritrean territorial integrity" to be respected, no "Sudanese national unity" to be restored. These are bourgeois fictions, mystifications by which each ruling class binds its own proletariat to the mast of its own accumulation drive and dispatches it to die for the valorization of capital. The Italian Left settled this question definitively in its analyses of both world wars: imperialist war is universal and objectively counter-revolutionary; the working class has no side to choose among bourgeois states; and the only legitimate response is the transformation of the inter-state war into civil war along class lines. Lenin's revolutionary defeatism, which the Italian Left preserved against the betrayals of the Third International after 1924, applies here without modification. The Sudanese proletariat who shoulders an SAF rifle against an RSF position, the Eritrean conscript marched to a Sudanese bridge, the Egyptian fellah enlisted to "defend the Nile," and the Ethiopian worker whipped into nationalist fervor over Assab is the same proletariat, and each is routinely murdered on behalf of fractions of capital that have no homeland and no nationality, only an insatiable appetite for surplus value.

The "anti-imperialist" frameworks that often circulate in the bourgeois left, which propose to support one country or another over alignment with the U.S., Europe, and Israel, or Russia, China, and Iran, and the developing nations, must be rejected as the mirror image of the social-patriotism that destroyed the Second International. There are no historically-progressive bourgeoisies anymore. The UAE's gold mines, Russia's Red Sea base, Egypt's hydraulic monopoly, Ethiopia's electricity exports, and American mediation gambits all are expressions of the same global system, varying only in which fraction of capital momentarily holds the upper hand; to choose between them is to choose between executioners. The communist task is not, therefore, to propose a "solution" within the framework of the existing states; rather it is to insist, against every nationalist current sweeping over the proletariat from Cairo to Addis Ababa and all points in between, on the unity of the international working class against its own bourgeoisies, on the rejection of "national defense," and on the patient reconstitution of the international party of the proletariat as the only organ capable of converting the catastrophe now opening in northeast Africa into the beginning of the global revolutionary settlement that capital has been postponing for over a hundred years. The Nile will not be saved from imperialism and climate destruction by bourgeois treaties but, along with the workers of all its basin states, only when it ceases to be a frontier between alien competing interests and becomes the common possession of an associated humanity self-liberated from the bonds of capitalism, of private property, wage labor, and endless warfare.

Another Nail on the Coffin of Ahistorical Kurdish Nationalism

In our article titled "The Kurdish Question Remains Unresolved as the PKK Dissolves Itself," published on issue 16 of EKP (July 2025), we wrote the following:

"In the current conjuncture leading toward a new World War, the Turkish state is addressing both its own and Syria's greatest security vulnerabilities through this process. Kurdish nationalists are now openly declaring that Kurds in Turkey will serve the Turkish Republic, while they cannot object to Kurds in Syria serving the HTŞ. In this environment, there is one point that neither Turkey, nor Syria, nor the U.S. is discussing: the PKK's Iranian branch, PJAK. No one is talking about PJAK laying down its arms. Behind the scenes of the arms-burning spectacle, the PKK's military strength appears set to be transferred to Eastern Kurdistan. Thus, the Kurdish dagger has been withdrawn from Turkey's throat in the interests of U.S. imperialism and pressed against Iran's throat."

We can say that the events that have unfolded over the past year or so have largely confirmed our analysis. In this article, we will examine these events and analyze the current situation arising from the war in Iran.

Syria and Western Kurdistan

On March 11, 2025, Jolani, the leader of the HTŞ regime in Syria, and Mazlum Abdi, the commander of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)—led by the YPG, the armed wing of the PKK in Western Kurdistan—signed the first agreement outlining the SDF's integration into the Syrian state. The integration date was set for 2025. However, since the idea of resisting the agreement was widespread among the YPG rank-and-file and some of its leaders, and given the context where Israel was also targeting HTŞ, the SDF chose to resist the implementation of the agreement. HTŞ first began attacking the Kurds in Aleppo, then launched attacks on SDF positions, starting with Der Hafir and Maskana, followed by Taqba and southern Raqqa. After the SDG withdrew, HTŞ quickly seized a vast area encompassing Deir ez-Zor and the entirety of Raqqa. Arab elements within the SDF abandoned the Kurdish nationalists one after another and joined HTŞ.

The SDF, now reduced to a mere front for the YPG, signed a ceasefire and integration agreement on January 30, 2026, ceding all the territories it had lost, all border posts, and oil wells to HTŞ, while stipulating that its military units join the Syrian army individually and that control of all civilian institutions be transferred to the Syrian state. Government forces entered Hasakeh and Qamishli. Thus, the existence of the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria has effectively and legally come to an end. While the right to education in one's mother tongue was not even recognized, the most significant gains for Kurdish nationalists were the appointment of the governor of Hasakeh and the Deputy Minister of Defense, as well as the return of displaced Kurdish refugees to Afrin—which is under Turkish occupation—and the Sheikh Maksud neighborhood of Aleppo.

Now part of the Syrian state, Kurdish nationalists took their places in the Syrian delegation led by Foreign Minister Shabani at the 2026 Munich Security Conference held on February 13–15. The leading states of Western imperialism had finally rewarded the Kurdish nationalists by granting them a seat in the conference halls, having sold out the cause of moderate autonomy—for which the youth of Western Kurdistan had been dying for years—without any resistance.

Turkey and Northern Kurdistan

In late July, a National Solidarity, Brotherhood, and Democracy Commission regarding the peace process was established in the Turkish parliament, and its first meeting took place on August 5. The commission began holding talks with representatives of leading organizations from various segments of society—including representatives of the Kurdish Hezbollah. On October 7, Devlet Bahçeli, the leader of the traditional fascist MHP who had initiated the process, proposed that the commission meet with PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, who is imprisoned on İmralı Island. Before the meeting could take place, the PKK announced on October 26 that it had withdrawn from Turkey, and on November 16, that it had withdrawn from the Zap region of South Kurdistan. On November 17, Öcalan demanded the "right to hope" for himself—that is, to be considered to have served his sentence and be released. On November 24, one MP each from the AKP, MHP, and DEM Party met with Öcalan on İmralı Island. During the meeting, Öcalan stated that his demands for both Turkish and Syrian Kurds did not take precedence over democratic local governance.

Öcalan called for the SDF to lay down its arms and integrate into the Syrian Armed Forces by December 30, 2025. As soon as the fighting in Syria spread beyond Aleppo, he stated in his first statement that the conflict was undermining the process. The delay in adhering to the integration agreement in Syria was undoubtedly a grass-roots and cadre initiative developed in defiance of Öcalan's instructions. On the other hand, the stance taken by this individual—who is widely regarded as the undisputed leader of the Kurdish nationalist movement in Western Kurdistan, just as in Northern Kurdistan—was undoubtedly a major factor in the YPG's surrender without much resistance to the first attack by HTŞ, much like a house of cards.

Öcalan, who defines his own status as that

of the Kurds, simultaneously instills in the Kurds from within the "thousand-year brotherhood ideology" that the Turkish state has been perpetuating for decades, stating, "There can be no Kurds without Turks, nor Turks without Kurds." Öcalan's influence serves to transform the Kurdish nationalist movement, which regards him as its leader, into an instrument of Turkish imperialism.

In contrast, the demand for education in the mother tongue—essential even for the slightest illusion of equal citizenship—remains unaddressed.

Iran and Eastern Kurdistan

The war in Iran, which began on February 28, 2026, when the U.S. and Israel launched airstrikes against Iran, has now shifted attention to Eastern Kurdistan. The Kurdish nationalist organizations in Eastern Kurdistan—PJAK, the Iranian KDP, the Kurdistan Toilers' Party (Komala), PAK, and Xebat—had announced the formation of the Iranian Kurdistan Political Forces Coalition six days before the war, on February 22. On March 4, the Iranian Kurdistan Komala Party also joined the coalition. Thus, all the leading Kurdish nationalist organizations in Eastern Kurdistan have united. Among these forces, the IKDP stands out in terms of the number of supporters, while PJAK stands out in terms of military strength.

Following the outbreak of the war, the Coalition called for an uprising in Iranian Kurdistan and announced that its forces within Iranian borders were in conflict with the regime. In response, the Iranian state began bombing the Coalition's positions in Eastern Kurdistan. Across the border, in Southern Kurdistan, reports leaked to the press that the CIA and Mossad were training thousands of Eastern Kurdish military units. In contrast, Iran declared that the crossing of Kurdish militias into the country from the Iraqi border would be considered a *casus belli* against Southern Kurdistan.

In fact, U.S. President Trump, who spoke directly by phone with IKDP leader Mustafa Hicri, seemed to be warning to the idea of using the Kurds—who he initially described as "very useful"—as a front against Iran. On the other hand, the Regional Government of South Kurdistan in Iraq refused to serve as the spearhead for the U.S. and Israel. The reason for this is not the principled pacifism of South Kurdistan's leaders, but the danger of being crushed between Iran on one side and the pro-Iranian Iraqi state on the other. Moreover, it is known that the YNK—one of South Kurdistan's leading bourgeois parties, led by the Talabani clan—maintains good relations with Iran. When South Kurdistan adopted such a stance, other Kurdish political parties inevitably followed suit and declared they would not enter the war. In response, Trump stated that he would not use the Kurds in the war for the time being because he did not want them to suffer harm.

Given the current state of the war between the U.S. and Iran, where weapons more effective than the "Kurdish dagger" are in play, the Kurds are not currently participating in the war. In contrast, it can be said that a large-scale armed struggle has only just begun in Eastern Kurdistan.

An Internationalist Solution to the Kurdish Question

Neither the secret deals between bourgeois Kurdish nationalist party leaders and the bourgeois states that have oppressed the Kurds for decades, nor the fighting of Kurdish working-class youth against Arab, Turkish, and Iranian working-class youth can bring a real solution to the Kurdish question.

Events have repeatedly shown—and continue to show—that a bourgeois, i.e., national and democratic, solution to the Kurdish question, guided by global and regional imperialist powers, has long been impossible.

The only solution to the Kurdish question lies in the class struggle. The Kurdish proletariat must embrace the historical experiences of class struggle, including the establishment of workers' councils, and rebuild class-based unions together with the Turkish, Arab, and Iranian proletariats.

Today, there is only one political party that both genuinely advocates for an internationalist solution to the Kurdish issue and opposes all forms of national oppression: The International Communist Party. Just as with the proletariat of the entire Middle East and the world, the liberation of the Kurdish proletariat lies in finding its party and, under its leadership, joining the class struggle alongside its class brothers and sisters.

Cuba and the United States: Weak and Strong Capitalisms against the Cuban Working Class

In January, the United States administration under Trump, considered Cuba a threat to national security and subsequently tightened restrictions and sanctions that have already endured for over 60 years, intensifying the existing economic crisis that plunges 95% of the Cuban population below the poverty line, surviving on less than \$1.90 a day.

The embargo includes a series of economic, commercial, and financial restrictions; sanctions against petroleum suppliers; essential goods; import/export prohibitions to certain countries;

The Hell ..

(continued from pg. 3)

shipped to China for final processing. The United Arab Emirates is the main hub for gold, often originating from the informal "artisanal" trade in eastern Congo, via Uganda and Rwanda.

In 2025, the sector contributed over 40% of the central government's tax revenue. In recent years, the number of active licenses for large-scale mining—referred to as industrial mining—has grown significantly: there are currently between 100 and 120 large industrial mining sites operating. These mines are controlled by foreign capital, with an overwhelming Chinese presence: more than 200,000 salaried miners work here.

There are also the so-called Artisanal Mines (ASM), which are the vast majority; it is estimated that there are about 3,000 mining centers of this type, particularly in the east of the country, in the regions of North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri and Maniema.

The landscape of artisanal mines is a mosaic of conflicting interests, where various armed bourgeois gangs fight over the loot on the skin of millions of miners, known as creuseurs, from the French "excavators".

With a share exceeding 70% of global cobalt production, the Democratic Republic of Congo holds control of this now essential resource: the global battery market depends entirely on the stability of the Lualaba and Upper Katanga provinces, where it is mainly mined.

In recent years, the Congo has become the world's second-largest copper producer, surpassing Peru and closely following Chile. Copper mining is concentrated almost entirely in the southern part of the country, within the so-called Central African Copperbelt, a geological region that stretches from the Congo to Zambia.

Gold, on the other hand, is extracted both in large mines like Kibali, one of the world's largest gold mines, and in thousands of "artisanal" sites in various eastern provinces, including Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu.

Essential for electronics, Tungsten and Tantalum/Coltan are mainly mined in the east, in North Kivu, South Kivu and Maniema.

Diamond mines are present in the south-central region of Kasai (Mbuji-Mayi).

Of particular note is the strong development of lithium extraction with large deposits identified in Manono, in the province of Tanganyika, in the far southeast.

The March 23 Movement

Between late January and early March, a series of landslides, triggered by heavy rains and a complete lack of reinforcement in the mine shafts, caused collapses at several mining sites in Rubaya, in the Masisi territory of the troubled North Kivu province, an eastern region bordering Uganda and Rwanda. An unknown number of miners, estimated at over 600, were buried alive under the collapse of entire hillsides. The mines are located in a mountainous area where torrential rains make the ground extremely unstable, transforming the tunnels into death traps. This is not an isolated incident; on June 19, another landslide killed more than 300 workers.

Coltan (columbite-tantalite) is primarily mined in this region; it is then refined to obtain tantalum and niobium, rare transition metals known for their high melting point, excellent corrosion resistance, and ductility—essential characteristics for producing high-capacity, miniaturized electronic capacitors used in smartphones, computers, cameras, and communication satellites. Tantalum is also fundamental for some medical prostheses, while niobium is crucial for special steels and superconductors.

The entire area is currently under the control of an armed rebel movement called M23, March 23 Movement, the date of a 2009 agreement that, according to these militias, the Congolese government has not respected.

The group was formed a few years later, in 2012, following a revolt by a faction of Congolese soldiers, primarily of Tutsi ethnicity. They claim to be fighting to protect their community from the Hutu militias (FDLR - Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda) - forces are still present and active in Congo today, accusing the Kinshasa government of having betrayed agreements regarding salaries, military ranks, and the security of their community.

The M23 is a well-organized militia with a conventional army arsenal: mortars, rocket launchers, and heavy machine guns mounted on large pickup trucks. New in 2026 is the use of kamikaze drones and sophisticated targeting systems. They also possess MANPADS (Man-Portable Air Defense Systems) that make flying dangerous for UN and Congolese army helicopters.

Unlike other paramilitary groups that wear civilian clothing, M23 soldiers wear modern uniforms, bulletproof vests, and helmets, often very similar to those used by the Rwandan army. The group occupied the strategic coltan mines in May 2024 and consolidated its power throughout 2025, effectively establishing a parallel administration and imposing taxes on mining production.

In early 2025, they expanded their territory, seizing control of Goma—the capital of North Kivu—and later Bukavu—the capital of South Kivu—both in the eastern part of the country, not far from the Rwandan border. They now control almost all the mining areas in these territories, where tens of thousands of artisanal miners work. Rather than directly managing each mine, the M23 implements a tax system on the miners and intermediaries. It is estimated that this system can provide them with up to \$1 million a month, making them financially independent.

Since the minerals extracted in these territories cannot be sold legally, as they are classified as "conflict minerals," they must be smuggled. Most of them end up in Rwanda; there they are mixed with local production and re-exported with Rwandan certifications, making it nearly impossible for companies (like Apple, Samsung, or Tesla) to guarantee their origin (but these multinational care little about where the merchandise comes from or whether it is stained with the blood of workers).

From East Africa, the ore is shipped to large smelters, concentrated mainly in China, although there are also some in Malaysia and Thailand. Here, the raw coltan is smelted and the metallic tantalum is separated. Chemical traceability is lost: once the minerals from a rebel-controlled mine and those from a legal mine are smelted together, they become indistinguishable.

According to the efficient bourgeois bureaucracy, there is a certification system called ITSCI (International Tin Supply Chain Initiative) that uses tags to track sacks of ore from authorized mines. However, local officials often sell the tags to traffickers, and the ore extracted by rebels is mixed with the "ethical" ore in warehouses.

In January, after the first mine collapse, the flow of tantalum, defined as the soul of smartphones, was temporarily interrupted, causing a price spike of 10% in a single week, reaching \$130 per pound in February.

On February 24, near Rubaya, an attack by Congolese government forces killed Willy Ngoma, a high-ranking officer and prominent figure in the M23. He responded with a drone attack, loaded with cluster munitions, against government bases in Kisangani, the capital of Tshopo province, and by bombing some residential areas of Goma, causing numerous civilian casualties.

The Congo River Alliance

The M23 is part of what is called Alliance Fleuve Congo (AFC), a political-military coalition officially formed on December 15, 2023 with

and a blocking of banking activities, including access to international payment systems, all of which are of enormous hindrance to commerce.

The embargo, by drastically reducing energy supplies, has paralyzed transportation, generalized power blackouts, reduced tourism, and increased a shortage of medication and hospital equipment and school supplies, foodstuffs, flour, rice, milk, sugar and meat, in a country that depends largely on imports.

The main commercial partners are still Russia, China, Spain, Mexico, and Venezuela.

Venezuela was particularly important for petroleum supplies, supplying between 30 to 35% of Cuba's demand in the last decades, a percentage that drastically got reduced after the new agreements following the farcical attack by the United States in Caracas and the new imposed political Venezuelan bourgeois regime.

However, the sanctions and the retreat of its main commercial partners have put aggravated an economy and way of life in Cuba already operating for Capital, despite today's plentiful opportunists and leftists nationalists who consider Cuba a "good and socialist" model, against the model of the "evil free market" of the United States.

The Cuban Revolution of 1959 cleared the

the stated goal of overthrowing the current government.

The financing of the AFC follows the same channels as that of the M23, and is mainly based on mining exploitation by imposing a 15% tax on the value of coltan extraction.

The AFC has appointed its own administrators and judges in Goma and the occupied areas, instituting a tax system that levies taxes on traders, market stalls and even transport; a parallel state.

Unlike the initial demands of the M23, which were more sectoral and linked to the Tutsi ethnic group and the 2009 patents, the AFC has a national agenda, accusing the Kinshasa government of corruption and demanding the creation of a federal state.

As we write, Corneille Nangaa, a former Congolese civil servant labeled a traitor by the central government and turned one of the coalition leaders, has declared that the AFC will not recognize the "Washington Accords" signed between the DRC and Rwanda until the movement is included as a direct partner in the negotiations.

In this context of everyone against everyone, it is not surprising that the current Congolese government repeatedly accuses neighboring Rwanda of providing logistical support, advanced weaponry and regular troops to the AFC/M23.

The advance of the M23 has transformed North and South Kivu into a vast refugee camp. In the first months of 2026, more than 250,000 displaced households were registered in the east of the country. Many of these are "repeatedly displaced," forced to flee multiple times due to shifting war fronts.

The crisis transcends national borders: in refugee camps, such as Busuma in Burundi, the situation has deteriorated rapidly; the camps, which house thousands of people fleeing the fighting, are plagued by a violent cholera epidemic and are targeted by drone attacks.

The Dramatic Condition of the Working Class

What happened in Rubaya was predictable. Torrential rains acted upon land ravaged by rampant excavation.

The miners work and live in horrific conditions; the vast majority do not have regular contracts. Even today, they dig with hand tools in narrow, poorly ventilated tunnels, hoping to find enough ore to feed their families. Thousands of children are employed to penetrate the narrowest tunnels. On a hill riddled with holes, thousands dig frantically, often under the threat of rifle fire. When the ground gives way, there are no rescue teams, and it is the miners' own coworkers who dig through the mud with their bare hands.

Those who do not die buried in the mud suffer from chronic respiratory illnesses; others have physical deformities due to the transport of heavy sacks along muddy paths.

Each artisanal miner must pay a tax for digging and another for extracting the ore from the site. They're left with just a few dollars a day, 10 at most! In contrast, once introduced into the global distribution chain through smuggling, the value of the extracted ore grows exponentially, and many become wealthy.

To avoid army roadblocks along the main roads, the ore is transported on foot through the dense jungle to clandestine collection centers. Crossing the border completes its journey. Thanks to forged origin documents declaring its Rwandan provenance, the ore is "cleaned," meeting the bourgeoisie's "rigorous ethical requirements" of "green" goods.

Often, disputes over mine ownership spark clashes between guards and even the military, transforming the sites into battlefields where workers are trapped and killed.

In Government Mines

In Lualaba province, in southern Congo, mines are under the control of government forces; however, the situation for the working class remains unchanged.

Kolwezi, the provincial capital, is the nerve center for the extraction of various minerals considered strategic. The soil here is reddish, rich in cobalt and copper, essential components for the electric vehicle industry. It is no coincidence that most of the mining concessions and industrial zones in the region are held by Chinese companies. In China, more plug-in electric cars are already being sold than gasoline/diesel cars.

Last November, in Kalanda, near the capital, another workers' tragedy unfolded. Among the victims were many displaced, unregistered workers, which hampered a definitive count. Although the mine had been closed by the government due to torrential rains that had compromised its stability, thousands of artisanal miners continued working there. Government forces (FARDC) intervened, even opening fire at point-blank range to disperse the crowd. The mass of workers surged onto a makeshift bridge over a deep, flooded trench, which gave way, and the miners fell into the mud and deep water; many drowned, and others were crushed in the crush. The government reported 40 deaths, but various local associations denounced the disappearance of many more miners. Rescue operations were hampered by the military presence, which initially prevented family members from accessing the area.

Furthermore, it was revealed that the military was charging an entrance fee to the mine shafts, ignoring seasonal mining bans. The result is a situation entirely similar to that of the miners in the rebel-controlled east.

The Islamic State

What makes life hellish for the proletariat in the Congo are also the incursions of the Islamic State.

In the northeast, on Wednesday, April 1st, a violent attack struck the territory of Mambasa, in the province of Ituri. The perpetrators are believed to be rebels from the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF).

Born in the 1990s in Uganda as an internal opposition movement, later taking refuge in eastern Congo, today they are an integral part of ISCAP (Islamic State Central Africa Province), affiliated with ISIS, from which they receive financial support through complex networks that pass through Somalia, South Africa, Kenya and Uganda.

At least 50 people were killed in the village of Bafwakoa, near Niania. The attackers set fire to dozens of homes, as well as vehicles and motorcycles. Some were hacked to death with machetes, others burned alive inside their own houses.

The ADF is no stranger to actions of this kind, including against workers. Just days earlier, between March 9 and 15, a violent attack on the Muchacha and Babesua mining sites resulted in the deaths of more than 50 workers. The group seized vast quantities of cash and gold ready to be introduced into the black market.

In 2025 alone, this group was responsible for the Ntoyo massacre in September, which resulted in the deaths of 72 civilians, and the Komanda massacre in Ituri in July, which resulted in 43 deaths.

There is no link between the ADF and the M23, as the two groups have different origins and ideologies. However, the ADF has taken advantage of the vacuum created by the M23's advance south to expand its own operations, including through the massacre of civilians in North Kivu and Ituri.

The ADF also finances itself through the exploitation of proletarian labor in illegal gold mines, the timber and cocoa trade, and fees imposed on local populations. It currently controls the mines

way for the development of capitalism and a national bourgeois class, freed from its backward semicolonial system. It freed itself from United States imperialism only to fall under the influence of its rival, Russian imperialism, emulating the illusion that a centralized state apparatus, an expression of the national bourgeois class, could control the market economy.

It is fitting to remember that the Cuban "socialist" regime maintained long stretches of diplomatic and commercial ties with the Franco regime in Spain, showing that ideologies are nothing more than a falsehood at the service of capital's interest.

Here the same old history repeats itself between two conflicting bourgeois states, just like in the past and present, which support the "attacked" state against the other that is intended to be condemned. Economic and class analyses are completely set aside to make room for irrational states of mind that converge towards the two mortal enemies of the class struggle: patriotism and interclassism.

The propaganda of various fan groups strives to demonstrate which ruling class is less parasitic and anti-proletarian than the other. We are interested in reaffirming for those who ignore the fact that in Cuba, as in all countries today, capit-

along the Losselosse River in the Mambasa territory (Ituri), where it levies taxes on miners. They frequently attack mines not under their control to plunder the extracted gold.

In the first months of this year, violent attacks have occurred at mining sites near Luna and Komanda, both located deep within a vast jungle that facilitates the movement of armed groups and the smuggling of minerals into Uganda. In these raids, miners who were unable to escape were either killed on the spot or kidnapped to be used as slave laborers or in the deeper mines within the jungle.

Imperialism and the Spoils of Mining

It is in this scenario, dominated by the logic of profit and marked by systematic barbarity, that the great imperialist powers move, transforming the Congo into one of the main terrains of strategic confrontation between Chinese and American capitalists.

China has long been Kinshasa's main economic partner, controlling between 70% and 80% of mining production and owning nine of the country's ten largest cobalt mines. The CH-4 attack drones, used last February to strike the M23 leadership, are a commodity traded with Beijing. However, while China arms the government, its refineries, which process more than 70% of the "critical minerals," absorb much of the coltan and gold that the rebels extract and smuggle through Rwanda.

The Sicomines Pact, also known as the "Resources for Infrastructure" agreement, is a monumental and controversial economic cooperation agreement, signed in 2007 and renegotiated several times, most recently in 2024. Chinese companies reportedly committed to investing \$7 billion in roads and public works by 2040 in exchange for maintaining their concessions on copper and cobalt mines. However, on March 11, the Congolese government reportedly ordered a new technical and financial audit of the agreement's actual implementation.

US imperialism inserted itself into these cracks to counter China's enormous power in the region, adopting an equally ambivalent position. Although on March 2nd the US Treasury imposed harsh sanctions on the Rwandan army for its direct support of the M23, accusing it of training Congolese rebels, Rwanda would remain a crucial logistical hub, also for minerals destined for the American technology industry, creating a mutual dependence that would prevent a complete break.

Washington has long been pushing to reduce Chinese influence in the country, especially in the extractive sector. An opening to the West culminated in the Strategic Partnership Agreement, signed between December 2025 and March 2026, which would grant US companies a "right of first refusal" on a range of critical assets, including copper, lithium, and tantalum, in exchange for military support and security guarantees.

Another sign of this potential strategic repositioning is the recent sale of the mining company Chama to the US firm Virtus Minerals. The deal, valued at \$30 million and including a \$750 million investment plan, favored an American buyer over a Chinese one for the management of one of the world's largest cobalt sites. Meanwhile, the Lobito Corridor project, financed by the United States and the European Union with multimillion-dollar investments, continues. This project aims to connect Congolese mines to the Angolan port on the Atlantic, replacing the eastern route to China.

A little further east, the situation seems to mirror this: while Congo tries to balance Beijing's excessive power by opening up to Washington, Rwanda is trying to integrate itself economically more and more with China, seeking to make itself less vulnerable to US sanctions and political pressure.

As communists, we feel compelled to reiterate that Kinshasa's chronic instability does not pose an obstacle to major imperialist powers; on the contrary, the "failure of the Congolese state" and the state of permanent war constitute an ideal condition for the current economic confrontation. A territory fragmented into "military fiefdoms" is infinitely easier to plunder than a centralized state, which could foster ambitions for economic sovereignty and claim greater control over the country's resources.

The current confrontation between Beijing and Washington must therefore be interpreted as a competition for control of the vital arteries of the industry of the future. When the juggernauts of these imperialisms collide head-on, the Congo will be one of their first battlegrounds.

Everyone Against Everyone, And Always Against the Proletariat.

If in the 19th century it was rubber that ignited the war and civilian industry of Leopoldine Belgium, today it is cobalt, coltan and lithium that set the rhythm of the macabre dance of capitalism.

The tragedies of the miners in recent months have made it clear that, regardless of who controls the territory—be it the central government or rebels of any faction—the lives of millions of Congolese proletarians are worthless to any of the armed forces involved. Only the minerals matter, contested between rival bourgeois factions and amidst the pressures of the major imperialist powers.

The so-called "ecological transition," touted by capitalist propaganda from the West to the Far East, is a false and illusory narrative, a greenwash applied to the rotting corpse of commodity production. There is nothing "clean" in the blood-soaked mud of the Congo. Every "ecological battery" contains a bit of the blood and unpaid labor of an African proletariat. Herein lies the fetishism of the commodity; the gadget in the shop window conceals the brutality of the process that generated it. Infant mortality, mutilations caused by mine collapses, respiratory illnesses brought on by dust are just a small part of the production costs that capital's balance sheet fails to record.

In Congo, peace is a luxury the market cannot afford. The dozens of armed groups are offshoots of various bourgeois gangs, sometimes appendages of the bourgeoisies of neighboring countries, who in turn are subcontractors for the major imperialist blocs.

services; ETECSA, the monopoly on telephone and internet services; Corp. Habanos SA, a joint venture between the state-owned Cubatabaco group and the British tobacco company Imperial Tobacco; BioCubaFarma, which groups together pharmaceutical companies; and Cubana de Aviación, the national airline that controls domestic and international flights. These are just some of the most important examples.

Many of these companies operate through

offshore companies registered abroad, often in Panama, to circumvent U.S. sanctions, demonstrating how state capital merges with private capital.

The Cuban proletariat, increasingly impoverished and numerous, crushed by the internal struggles of the bourgeoisie, and divided between two governments under two national flags vying for control of capitalist commerce, will gain nothing by allying itself with its own exploitative rul-

ing class. The proletariat has nothing to gain by defending the current generals in the name of the ahistorical bourgeois myth of “national sovereignty”, nor by overthrowing the military bureaucracy of GAESA if it is simply replaced by private managers flying US flags. Hunger, blackouts, and poverty will not end with a change of flag or administration of the state-owned enterprise.

Taking sides with the national power or supporting the weaker exploiter, mistakenly con-

sidered the “lesser evil”, is a misleading and erroneous narrative.

For the working class, the enemy lies within its own borders: its own bourgeois exploiters, whether in Cuba, the United States, China, Russia, or Europe. Their salvation and emancipation can only be achieved through class struggle and organization to secure better living conditions, better wages, better working hours, free and efficient healthcare, education, the right to hous-

ing, and, subsequently, revolutionary unity with workers worldwide, including those in the “aggressor” states.

The historical compass is unique, both in Havana and in New York: the rejection of any interclass front for the destruction of the wage system and the law of value.

FOR THE CLASS UNION

Toward a Coordination of Class-Struggle Worker Formations Contra Labor Notes

Over the past several months, Party comrades in the U.S. intervening within the Class Struggle Action Network (CSAN) have continued developing contacts among militant workers and oppositional formations active inside several established unions in the United States. This work has proceeded not on the basis of reforming the existing union apparatuses through electoral maneuvers or democratizing formulas, but through efforts to place workers organized on class lines into contact with one another and to promote methods of struggle independent of labor-management collaboration, bourgeois legal-reform methods, and the political parties of capital.

During the winter, comrades participated in a campaign supporting an electrical apprentice facing retaliation on the job, denial of disability accommodations, and eventual blacklisting from an apprenticeship program through the combined actions of employers and the union apparatus. Militants attempted to organize collective pressure against both the employers and union officials involved, raising demands not only around reinstatement but against blacklisting practices, collaboration between union officials and contractors, and the broader suppression of militant workers inside the union structure itself. Workers from different unions and industries were drawn into support efforts, and direct collective actions were organized in an attempt to push the struggle beyond the narrow legal channels prescribed by the labor apparatus.

As the campaign developed, legalistic conceptions increasingly asserted themselves among sections of the support effort. Pressure mounted to reduce the struggle to the pursuit of reinstatement through labor-law mechanisms while abandoning the broader class demands which had emerged through the campaign. We communists defended the necessity of maintaining collective class methods and resisting the reduction of the struggle to an individualized juridical case mediated through the same state and union structures responsible for the attack in the first place. Although the apprentice ultimately pursued the legal route and was later expelled from the union, the campaign nevertheless produced important consequences. A layer of militant union electricians in Northern California, who had themselves been attempting to organize opposition to the official apparatus on class-struggle lines, reached out after observing the methods and positions advanced throughout the campaign. Discussions soon followed regarding the union question, labor legality, and the limitations of the reformist current dominant within the labor movement.

After learning that many of these workers, alongside comrades active within CSAN, would be attending the upcoming 2026 Labor Notes conference in Chicago, a proposal was advanced that discussions should move toward organizing a coordinated intervention and joint event bringing together those worker formations distinguishing themselves from the labor-left reformist current.

Out of these various discussions and contacts emerged the proposal, advanced by comrades within CSAN and subsequently adopted by the network, to organize a joint event during the Labor Notes conference. Comrades then undertook the work of drafting an initial proposal and opening discussions with various workers’ organizations and oppositional formations with whom contact had been developed over the previous year through interventions within the union terrain.

Italy: The Party’s Trade Union Activity

Trade union activity has continued in recent months in Italy.

In addition to activities within the grassroots union USB, most efforts have focused on a new so-called “self-organized” initiative, created with the aim of uniting the efforts of grassroots unions and those of the CGIL.

We recall that a similar attempt was made in 2019 with the Coordinamento Lavoratori Autoconvocati (CLA), which still exists but has, over time, transformed into an organization dedicated to promoting union actions on the issues of Health, Safety, and Repression in workplaces and across the country, organizing initiatives to encourage the broadest possible union participation and forging relationships with certain grassroots unions.

Consequently, the CLA has lost its capacity for intervention in strikes and for connecting the various groups within the union movement that are leading the battle for the unity of action of class-based unionism.

The CLA has become part of a broader coordination body called “Coordinamento 12 ottobre,” which, however, has proven to be less dynamic than the CLA itself and has a narrower focus—specifically, the issues of health, safety, and repression.

The new self-organized initiative, launched last October, is not only operating—for now—in the areas we identified at the outset of the CLA’s work but is also demonstrating, to a small yet visible extent, greater vitality, with the participation of groups of militant trade unionists in Rome, Genoa, Turin, and Milan.

It is made up primarily of militant trade unionists from the CGIL, as well as from the USB, SI Cobas, and the CUB.

The initiative emerged in the wake of the demonstrations against the war in Gaza, which led on October 3 to a united strike by all grassroots unions alongside the CGIL, with the latter having been forced to do so to stem the internal discontent that had arisen when, in response to the previous general strike called by the grassroots unions for September 22, the national leadership of the CGIL saw fit to boycott it by calling, seven days earlier, a separate and competing strike for September 19.

Based on that experience, in response to the 2026 budget bill presented in late October, many workers and delegates in the grassroots unions and the CGIL supported an appeal calling for a united strike against the budget bill, promoted by the Rome-based group of what would later become the small “self-organized” movement, and which concluded with the slogan: no more

separate strikes!

This was followed by several assemblies and the formation of an open national executive group composed of about twenty union activists, which has already met a dozen times.

The leaderships of the USB and the CGIL, however, objectively collaborated in promoting two separate strikes instead: on the one hand, the strike by all the grassroots unions on November 28; on the other, the strike by the CGIL alone on December 12.

Both strikes proved poorly, revealing, among other things, the ebb of the September and October movement that had brought hundreds of thousands of demonstrators into the streets.

That movement was certainly an expression of a deep-seated social malaise that still manifests itself on an interclassist terrain—one of opinions—rather than on the concrete terrain of class struggle, which involves sacrifices such as confronting bosses and strikebreakers in the workplace. Nevertheless, the strikes called by the grassroots unions took a step in this direction.

The division of the strikes against the budget law, however, caused a regression from that more advanced point that had been reached. That portion of new energy that had been set in motion and could have been drawn into the trade union struggle was thus partly squandered.

With the new year, based on the fact that within the Autoconvocati there was a widely held view that war and rearmament will be increasingly prominent issues in the workers’ struggle movement, we proposed issuing an appeal to all unions so that on May 1, a day of struggle and international unity for the working class, to hold united demonstrations, putting an end to the obscene practice whereby in Italy the situation is worse than during strikes: since this is a day of mobilization of the working class that is more politically charged (initiated by the Second International), the mobilizations are often even more divided along party lines, which are often forcibly made to coincide with union boundaries.

In May, the leaderships of the grassroots unions gave further proof of their opportunism, taking another step backward from what had been gained in the field of the union struggle in September–October.

A coalition of grassroots unions (Cub, SI Cobas, Sgb, AdL) called for a general strike on May 29. A half-hearted strike, at a time when it is already difficult to make general strikes succeed in the fall—a period notoriously much more favorable in Italy than the spring and summer.

Currently afflicting Bolivian society does not stem from ‘mismanagement’, the corruption of the political cliques that have controlled the government, or the failure of the demagogic ‘process of change’ and its supposed ‘socialist’ orientation, touted by the opportunists of the MAS. This is a systemic crisis of global capitalism, of which Bolivia is a part, and which cannot be resolved through reforms, changes of government or ad hoc manoeuvres regarding fiscal policy and the restructuring of the bourgeois state. And, of course, neither the opportunists of the MAS (now fractured by internal struggles) nor the right-wing parties currently controlling the government will be able (or willing) to lead any revolutionary change; they will merely implement the ‘Gatto-pardian’ adjustments so that nothing changes and capitalism is maintained in the only way possible: by intensifying the exploitation of wage labour and proletarianising sections of the petty bourgeoisie.

It falls to the current government to implement the pending adjustments to Bolivian state capitalism which, based on the control of the extraction and commercialisation of raw materials found in its subsoil, generates a rent that flows to the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie and the transnationals through concessions, contracts, commercial alliances, but also through networks of corruption or preferential treatment for the pay packets of executives and managers and for the social stratum of the so-called ‘labour aristocracy’, and also through various populist programmes

ing interviews regarding the growing criticisms of the labor-left current and the limitations of the established unions.

Predictably, the moment the effort became public it immediately drew hostility from labor-left and collaboratorist layers tied to existing union apparatuses. Workers associated with participating groups have already experienced targeting and exclusion efforts. Several militants connected to the coordination have reportedly been banned from attending the Labor Notes conference itself, while others have faced denunciations and pressure campaigns aimed at isolating them from broader layers of union militants. This response merely confirms the political role of the labor-left current. While presenting itself as militant opposition to the conservative business union leadership, it functions in practice as the left wing of the regime unions, seeking to contain militant workers within the framework of reformism and suppress every tendency that begins moving toward genuine class independence.

As broader discussions have developed among participating workers, more theoretical and tactical questions regarding the union movement and the present phase of capitalist crisis have also emerged. During recent meetings, presentations and discussions were prepared on the Party’s positions concerning the trade-union question. It was reaffirmed that the union question is historical and not moral: the unions arose from the real necessity of proletarian defense under capitalism, but in the imperialist epoch the dominant trade-union organisms have become progressively integrated into the capitalist state through labor law, mediation systems, national productivity demands, and subordination to bourgeois political parties.

Against reformist illusions, comrades stressed that communists must intervene wherever workers are compelled to organize while maintaining complete political independence from the union apparatuses themselves. It was emphasized that under imperialism no serious economic struggle remains purely economic; every important workers’ struggle increasingly collides with the capitalist state itself through injunctions, labor regulations, nationalist production demands, and the political mechanisms of bourgeois rule. Against the fragmentation imposed by legal unionism by workplace, bargaining unit, trade, and nation, emphasis was placed on the necessity for workers to organize themselves from below through strike committees, assemblies, inter-workplace coordination, and forms of struggle capable of extending solidarity across sectors and borders while maintaining independence from bourgeois parties and labor-management collaboration.

The present effort remains limited and embryonic. Nevertheless, the growing contact between militant workers across different sectors, and the increasing emergence of discussions posed on the terrain of class independence rather than labor reformism, reflects an important development within the current period of low proletarian struggle in the United States. The effort remains significant not because it already constitutes a broader class movement, but because it expresses a step toward it as small groupings of advanced workers seek one another out beyond the limits imposed by the regime unions and their labor-left appendages.

As if that were not enough, the strike was called in an attempt to revive the movement in support of the Palestinian national cause, following the initiative of a new “Flotilla,” similar to what had happened in September–October.

In this way, the leaderships of the grassroots unions have revealed their endemic opportunistic stupidity, in the specific form of movementism. They failed to understand that in September, what set the masses in motion in Italy was not the Flotilla itself but the horror, fear, and rage over two years of massacre in Gaza—self-servingly broadcast daily by the news programs of the Italian bourgeois regime, which has always cultivated an “anti-American faction” within its ranks; They have failed to understand that that movement ended with the October truce in Gaza, however partial it may be, and no “Flotilla” can reignite it under such conditions. Finally, they have placed the union and the general strike at the service not of the working class but of an initiative alien to its movement and its organizations.

To make matters worse, the USB has called for a similar strike, with the same justifications, separate and in competition, for May 18.

The intent of the USB leadership, of its opportunist political group, is to gain influence within the interclassist movement that for years has taken the Palestinian national question as a symbol of social and political injustices, grounded in the bourgeois principles of “national self-determination” and “anti-colonialism,” and consequently adopting a partisan political line in the inter-imperialist conflict: anti-American and anti-Israeli, pro-Iranian and pro-Chinese.

The demonstrations on May 18 revealed the pitiful failure of this union leadership’s opportunist campaign. There were only a few hundred demonstrators in each city, a pale shadow of the tens of thousands seen in September and October.

Together with other union activists, we distributed a leaflet signed by the Autoconvocati at the Genoa demonstration, which was very well received by the workers present.

In general, we can say that our union activity has found further confirmation of its correctness, both in our accurate predictions of the failure of the opposing opportunist political and union approaches, and in the support we have garnered among militant union activists—well beyond the organizational boundaries of our party—as well as in the new contacts and active collaborations we have established with them.

which, although presented as means of achieving ‘social inclusion’, in reality promote clientelism, the demobilisation of the oppressed and, in the process, also generate profits for various companies linked to bourgeois power. But this model repeatedly tends to enter into crisis when international prices for state-controlled commodities fall, when the weight of debt chokes off financial breathing space, and when the size of the state, its bloated payroll, its numerous ministries, affiliated companies and institutes, and social programmes (populism/clientelism) become unsustainable and require restructuring or simply elimination through redundancies, restructuring, budget cuts and privatisations.

This is an economic cycle that leads to the political alienation of governments of the opportunistic, nationalist and electioneering left, prone to increasing the size of the state, and governments of the so-called right, which tend to be identified in ‘left-wing’ propaganda as neoliberal and supporters of reducing the size of the state. But both currents merely adopt the bourgeoisie’s ‘anti-crisis’ tactical variants, and history—even recent history—shows that the expansion or reduction of the size of the state has been embraced indiscriminately by both the bourgeois left and the bourgeois right. This is what brings together, even though they try to deny it through their rhetoric and propaganda, the policies of right-wing governments in Argentina and El Salvador with those of the ‘left’ in Venezuela, Chile and Brazil, for example. And that is the

(cont p. 6)

The Situation of the Unions in the U.S.

The following remarks were prepared by Party comrades working within the Class Struggle Action Network, for a coordination meeting of the For a Fighting Workers Movement which met to discuss various questions regarding the workers movement in the United States.

What is the state of the current workers movement?

This is not a simple or easy question to answer. To evaluate the state of the workers movement today we must consider 1) it’s development in relationship to the capitalist economy, its state and political parties over the course of history 2) the unique characteristic of the economic struggle in the development of the larger struggle for the emancipation of the proletarian class. In short the relationship between the unions, the workers defensive struggle and the revolutionary class political party.

The Historic Course of the Class Struggle

The union movement has always developed in fits and starts, encountering periods of great growth, matched with periods of stagnation and regression to the point of near total extinction. Yet as Marx notes in the Communist Manifesto, the continual advancement of communications technologies under capitalism, alongside the ever intensifying crisis of capitalist economy guarantee the periodic explosive reemergence of the workers’ defensive struggle and of its organization in ever more advanced and centralized forms.

The union movement achieved its most advanced form during the revolutionary wave of the last century when class unions across the world coalesced around the first few congresses of the Red International of Labour Unions (Profintern). Even if today we have only small sprouts of combative class unionism, historical experience points to a future reemergence of class unions that will not only explode beyond the confines of what currently seems possible, but exceed their predecessors in their organizational sophistication and class combativity.

The Three Historic Phases: illegality, Toleration, Subordination

We can broadly characterize the union movement in the U.S. and across the world as moving through three successive historical phases: that of illegality, tolerance, and today subordination. Likewise we can make a distinction between different types of unions which emerged alongside the historical maturation of productive forces in capitalist economy.

The early craft unions emerged out of the guild structures in the period of manufacture, the union federations followed, linking together the fragmentary craft unions into the general trade union movement. Industrial unions later exploded onto the scene and began to organize large sections of unskilled industrial workers in the late nineteenth century, as industrial production began to fully dominate the economy. As these unions began to clash with industrial capital, industrial capital began its merger with finance capital. The developed union movement soon had to confront capital in its imperialist stage which simultaneously required labor peace to ensure wartime production, and accrued enough superprofits to develop national labor aristocracies. The labor movement would subsequently experience a major split between the class unionist wing and the wing of class-collaborationist “yellow unionism”.

The historical experiences of this confirms a basic reality, that the level of combativity of the working class masses is tied to the course of the capitalist economy. The union movement, experienced its apex of militancy and organization during the revolutionary crisis in which a global clash of the working class against the capitalist class occurred wherein the working class was defeated. The current situation in the union movement is thus based on a balance of class forces wherein the capitalist state with its regime union apparatus rules totally hegemonic. Thus only a generalized crisis of capital can give birth to a renewed class movement; however, this movement will itself be a development on the past so long as it is led by its revolutionary class party which can hand down the lessons of struggle.

During the first phase of the union movement, early unions emerged from the breakdown of the old guild and artisan system as industrial capitalism proletarianized masses of workers who could no longer survive as independent producers. These first unions remained on narrow craft union lines and tended towards monopolistic characteristics of a minority of skilled workers defending against unemployment by controlling hiring. The National Labor Union attempted to move beyond this narrow organization and unite workers on a national basis around demands such as the eight-hour day. Under William H. Sylvius, who corresponded with Karl Marx and the International Workingmen’s Association, the NLU emphasized racial unity and a focus on economic defense organization. However, after Sylvius’ death the movement increasingly drifted toward electoral reformism and alliances with bourgeois political currents such as the Greenback Party contributing to its collapse during the crisis of the 1870s.

The period also came to be defined in the U.S. by the Open Shop movement which was an employer-led campaign that sought to keep workplaces free from union control and prevent workers from being required to join a union as a condition of employment. Through the Open Shop movement, American employers united around the principle that unions should neither be recognized nor negotiated with, seeking instead to prevent their establishment altogether. This coordinated effort to destroy independent worker organizations produced some of the most violent labor conflicts in U.S. history, including the Ludlow Massacre, the Battle of Blair Mountain, the Homestead Strike, and the Pullman Strike.

The second phase, that of tolerance, developed as capitalism expanded and increasingly required stable mechanisms for regulating labor relations and containing class struggle. Out of the defeats and repression following events such as the Haymarket affair emerged the American Federation of Labor under Samuel Gompers. Despite it’s future problems, the AFL initially represented an advancement from the old Knights of Labor. The AFL refused affiliation with any political parties, organizing itself as an exclusively working class organ of defense centering wage and workplace conditions struggles. Yet, emerging as it did in a period where there was no clear international Marxist party center, it inevitably drifted towards opportunism. Over time it increasingly consolidated around conservative craft unionism, collective bargaining, and collaboration with employers and the state while excluding large sections of the immigrant industrial working class. Worker unions such as the Western Federation of Miners, American Railway Union, American Labor Union, United Metal Workers, United Brotherhood of Railway Employees, frustrated with the increasingly conservative direction of the AFL eventually sought to create a new class pole for the labor movement to regroup around, forming the Industrial Workers of the World. As the AFL leadership tied itself directly to the capitalist state and the Democratic Party through labor-management collaboration and wartime production boards, the IWW faced brutal repression, imprisonment, and destruction. The capitalist class thus began to broker deals tolerating some unions that bent the knee and demonstrated subordination, while violently suppressing those who continued to put forward a real program of class defense.

The final phase, subordination, fully developed during the twentieth century amid the global counter-revolution. The Wagner Act of 1935 and the subsequent system of labor boards, certification elections, collective-bargaining contracts, and no-strike clauses progressively transformed

the established unions from relatively autonomous organs of workers’ economic defense into institutionalised regime unions integrated into the legal apparatus of the capitalist state. Historical developments such as the National Labor Relations Board framework, wartime no-strike pledges, and the postwar contract system are examples of how the established unions became institutional mediators of the sale of labor power, helping stabilize capitalist production by channeling class struggle into legally regulated forms compatible with the needs of national capital.

The Post-War Crisis and Labor Notes Origins

By the late 1960s and 1970s, as the economic crisis of that period exploded and ended the post-war prosperity, many of the major American unions such as the United Auto Workers and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters had consolidated into massive institutions controlled by small cliques of boss-linked leaders, where rank-and-file workers often had little direct control over contract bargaining and in most cases could not even meaningfully vote on contracts before implementation.

Yet the deepening economic crisis of the 1970s, and a slew of contracts bargained by leadership offering paltry wages, produced a wave of rank-and-file rebellion expressed through wildcat strikes such as the U.S. Postal Strike of 1970 and repeated Teamsters wildcats, where workers acted outside official union channels and in defiance of both employers and boss-linked union leaderships as workers demanded real raises in the face of declining living standards.

These struggles ultimately did not develop into a real overhaul of the established unions, nor to the foundation of new grassroots unions, but to a new labor-left reform current that sought to democratize the unions and challenge entrenched leadership, largely through pressure campaigns, electoral reform states, and closer alignment with liberal Democratic politics rather than through a break with the legal framework of labor regulation itself.

Thus the militant energies of the class were diverted away from consolidating themselves around a union program that coherently embraced an independent class orientation and instead coalesced around a reformist grassroots wing of labor left that while presenting itself as progressive nonetheless reproduces many of the same basic errors of class collaboration that extend back to the roots of the yellow unionist tendency.

The Current State of the Labor Movement

Today, the labor movement remains shackled to the edifice of the regime union. While attempts are made by small groups to revitalize the I.W.W. it remains highly influenced by opportunistic currents, fragmented and lacking mass energy. While disillusionment with the established unions and the new found “left” leadership in recent years is growing, the overall organization, fighting capacity and leverage of the class has not grown significantly, contained as it is within the established union framework.

The re-emergence of class unions will not take the same form as the stable, industry-bound, legally recognized unions familiar today. Depending on how struggle unfolds in each national context, class unions may arise either through the reconquest of existing unions by workers united behind an insurgent class program smashing the regime union apparatus in full, or through the creation of entirely new organs outside and against the established apparatus.

When capitalism enters a phase of acute crisis and legality ceases to regulate class conflict, new proletarian defensive organs tend to arise as fluid, interconnected networks rather than fixed institutions. In such moments, class organization may take the form of workers’ assemblies, strike committees, inter-factory councils, and territorial bodies, linking workplaces, sectors, and regions without regard for juridical boundaries. These organs coordinate strikes, mutual defense, and material support across the class, functioning as a network of struggle that converges and consolidates only later, if conditions permit. This is not a regression to “disorganization,” but a higher form of proletarian association corresponding to the breakdown of contracts, legal representation, and industry segmentation. Such spontaneous thrusts must develop into well organized and centralized defensive organs of the class which can coalesce the fighting energies into well executed and combative generalized strike actions sufficient to strike at the heart of the enormous monopoly enterprises of modern day capitalism.

What is necessary now is to develop nuclei and prefigurative structures of the future class union movement. Uniting the existing grass roots class formations into a united front from below, under a united program of combative class unionism.

What are the main issues within the union? Boss Linked Leaders, The Labor Aristocracy and the Regime Unions

First let us establish the fact that today society is divided between two classes: the proletarian and the bourgeois. There is not a separate “class of bureaucrats”, which have a fundamentally unique class orientation from these two classes, but instead a layer of opportunist boss-linked leaders who run the unions serving the employers interests.

Boss-linked leaders may be either paid union staffers, democratically elected leadership who in turn act as employers within the regime union firms or even cronystic cliques within the union membership who tie themselves to the boss and see themselves as comanaging the workplace. The manner in which this dynamic operates is different in each union. The problem is not just bureaucrats and “staffers”, unions having paid staff is not itself a problem. The issue lies in how established leadership ties itself to the boss, coaches workers into seeing a common interest in keeping the enterprise successful, while compelling workers to remain hitched to established labor union law, habituating generations to these fundamentally class collaboratorist practices, creating a vision of the union that is restrained to a pathetic shell of cretinistic boot-licking. The problem is not an imagined third class of “bureaucratic” interlocutors holding the unions hostage, nor is it merely the structure of the unions or its particular decision making method.

Keep in mind that the boss-linked leadership are often elected into power by the workers not merely due to the lack of cultural or theoretical development of the masses, not do to a lack of courageous individuals willing to break the mold, but due to the fact that many of these workers find their program the most agreeable as prevailing conditions don’t compel them to feel required to take more drastic actions in mass as of yet. This is made possible because of the material realities of the imperialist system which through the hyper-exploitation of workers in other nations, the capitalist class is able to “share” a chunk of its profit to pay off a large swath of the workers, creating a wide aristocratic layer by providing relatively better wages for a small group while ruthlessly exploiting the masses.

It is the wage differential that is essential in the labor aristocratic dynamic that keeps workers divided between the haves and the have nots. All American workers know they get paid better than their immigrant counterparts, and the immigrant comes here because they know they will be paid better than their fellows at home, the material reality and existence of the labor aristocracy is seen and felt by all workers but completely invisible to the professed leaders in the unions and among the opportunist parties. Thus the reality is that many workers, without the presence of a viable and strong class union, see their immediate material interests best served by these programs

of class collaboration and they will only revolt when they see the potential benefits of risking rebellion outweigh those of the false promises of opportunism. Yet we can rest assured that crisis ridden capitalism will guarantee conditions for such a revolt will certainly arise in the future.

Attempts at addressing the union issue on the basis of “democracy”, merely aims to change a decision making process. Yet as we have shown, such alternation means nothing if the overall objective economic and social conditions have not been changed. Such methods of altering the “form” of the unions cannot alone restore their class content; they only reconfigure what is already there. There is not a greater level of worker militancy than meets the eye waiting to be unlocked and unleashed, simmering just below the surface. Prevailing objective economic conditions inform the subjective realities of the class. This is why the union democracy movement is the movement of liberal reformism, because it presents the working class’s problem as a problem with the form of decision making in the unions. If the form can merely be reformed to open up the unions to greater worker participation then surely through democracy the workers movement will be saved. For the reformers, the form must be fixed first, then later we can get to the content. They quietly tell us to rest assured they agree on the point of “anti-capitalism” but they are taking the reasonable route and us the ideologues are reckless dogmatists. All that is needed is the proper activist technique, the right amount of zeroing in “meeting workers where they are at” (really meaning to lower themselves to the lowest common denominator) and carefully step by step moving them incrementally to ever greater degrees of carefully charted action escalations. All the workers movement needs are more training and workshops, to skill itself up. In the meantime we shouldn’t scare workers with words such as “capitalism” or “class”.

To change the form, they must never openly touch the content of the true violent nature of capitalist state and the gun it holds at the head of the workers. All that scary talk won’t win any new adherents, because to look at the reality of the problem would be to burst a bubble in all the bravado and solutionering. To solve this issue they smartly choose to petition and seek groups of reasonable collaboration with their supposed enemy who they implicitly recognize they cannot beat in a real struggle. The unbridgeable chasm between the interests of the workers and the bosses? No problem, so long as they do not alienate their coalitional partners in the petit-bourgeois.

Yellow unionism, sets as its goal achieving economic equality with the class of its exploiters. The forces of class unionism on the other hand recognized the fundamentally incompatible interests of the working class and the employers and that ultimately it is a historic struggle of forces which must result in the victory of one class and the extinction of the other.

The elements of yellow unionism however; would work to converge the social power of opportunism with the coercive power of the capitalist state, forming the basis of what we call the “regime union” in the post-war order, which in the age of imperialism have become the hegemonic form of union across the world.

Regime unions, despite their formal organization as unions, nonetheless no longer function as authentic defensive organs of the working class. Instead in practice they operate as the human relations branch of capitalist enterprises negotiating the sale of labor power for the firms through

the collective bargaining framework, labor-boss workplace comanagement agreements, formal grievance procedures, purging of communist leadership and most importantly the regulation and taming of strike conduct.

Saturated and saddled with navigating the rules and regulations of the capitalist state, pressured to conform to its edicts by coercive and conformist forces on all sides, formal top down conquest of such organs via electoral and tactical maneuvers of small groups of militants within the unions must be ruled out as hopeless. Thus only a mass movement of workers from the bottom up which clashes with the established leaders and completely smashes the regime union’s internal life has any potential of turning these organs back to useful ends for the class.

Nonetheless, the regime union offers one thing of value, membership remains exclusive to workers and workers alone, thus we cannot surrender agitation within open forums and meetings of such organizations as a means of advocating for the independent class organization of workers. As it is workers at the base who constitute the sole membership of even the regime unions, the workers still have the potential to reorganize themselves, abandoning their false leaders and shedding their conformism to the union regulatory apparatus which has habituated them to the narrow program of demoralization and class defeatism when the proper objective conditions arise.

Why Aggressive Wage and Reduction of Work Day Demands are Critical

Let’s reaffirm a basic fact, in capitalist society workers must sell their labor power in exchange for a wage in order to obtain the basic necessities of life or starve. Workers join unions primarily out of an economic self-interest, in order to defend their wages and working conditions. This self-interest transforms into a sense of class as the workers enter into conflict with the employer and as social solidarity arises.

In capitalist society workers encounter each other as individual sellers of their alienated labor power on the “labor market”. As such, workers are not only exploited by the bosses but also put into direct economic competition with one another to obtain the highest paying jobs, achieve “job security” against layoffs, etc.

As workers face declining conditions, the capitalists promise the dominant ethnic, gender and racial groups privileges and material stability if it joins it in stepping on the neck of its fellow workers. Yet these economic conditions are the same conditions which can inversely lead to masses of workers unifying around their shared economic interest against the class of exploiters. This is why it is critical to combat social chauvinism with aggressive wage demands that elevate all workers are prioritized by worker militants.

The program of right opportunism cannot be combated by using the familiar vocabulary of liberal bourgeois moral outrages but by exposing the real shared material economic interest between all workers. Such methods were first by the First International when anti-immigrant waves spread through the U.S. in the late 1800’s, it worked to create a common wage demand between continental workers immigrating to the U.S. and domestic American workers. These sorts of methods also underwrote the fight for the 8 hour work day which brought together the American and diverse immigrant groups in the late nineteenth century into a common fight.

Bolivia...

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situation we see in Bolivia, where an economic adjustment and a restructuring of the state are being pushed through – measures that the right-wing government of Paz had to face, but which the MAS would very likely have to implement if it were to take control of the government. And in both cases, they will choose the path of placing the full burden of the crisis on the shoulders of the workers.

Economic, political and social background
The social upheaval of May 2026 is the direct result of the exhaustion of the state capitalism model that prevailed under bourgeois reformism and the subsequent transition to a classic austerity regime. Following the departure of Luis Arce’s government at the end of 2025, Rodrigo Paz Pereira’s assumption of office marked an explicit shift towards so-called “economic orthodoxy”, seeking to correct fiscal imbalances and facilitate the capitalists’ management of the crisis, as always, by increasing the exploitation of workers. The Paz Pereira administration immediately implemented Supreme Decree 5516, a draconian fiscal adjustment plan aimed at “restoring order” to the national capitalist economy through the reorganisation of public finances and brutal cuts to state spending, reducing the state payroll by between 25% and 30%.

Although the new bourgeois government managed to temporarily stabilise the macroeconomic variables of interest to technocrats and international lenders – raising Net International Reserves (NIR) to \$3.813 billion in the first quarter of 2026 and partially containing the parallel dollar – the material basis of society is burdened by a catastrophic legacy. The year 2025 ended with inflation exceeding 20%, a historic shortage of liquid fuels and a massive loss of purchasing power in wages. The patience of the proletariat and the semi-proletarianised masses reached its limit, triggering the mass mobilisations that today shape the landscape of protest across the country.

The indefinite general strike began on 4 May 2026. At the time of writing this report, the strike had already been ongoing for three weeks and was likely to continue for some time given the intransigence of the government and employers.

The conflict is nationwide in scope, but its strength and intensity vary geographically. The absolute epicentre is the department of La Paz and the city of El Alto (where 50% of the country’s 67 rural roadblocks are concentrated). Cochabamba acts as the critical hub of paralysis on the routes to the west (with key points at Quillacollo and the Huaycili bridge). In contrast, the eastern region of Santa Cruz shows less class-based support for the strike, although it is economically suffocated due to the road isolation caused by the roadblocks. The city of La Paz has been progressively paralysed by the encirclement of roadblocks, with transport coming to a standstill, rubbish collection suspended (leaving the streets piled high with rubbish), food shortages, and hospitals issuing alerts over a lack of medical supplies; all this whilst ever-larger contingents of demonstrators are arriving in the city following long marches from other regions.

As for the social composition of the participants, we find the following:

- The Proletariat and Exploited Sectors: Mobilised by the Bolivian Workers’ Confederation (COB) following a mass town hall meeting in El Alto. Urban teachers (organised in the Departmental Federation of Urban Teachers), transport workers (La Paz Drivers’ Federation) and rank-and-file mining workers are participating with great militancy. The La Paz Drivers’ Federation is not a homogeneous class organisation; on the contrary, it brings together and amalgamates within its ranks both transport unit owners (petty bourgeoisie) and wage-earning or over-exploited workers (the driving proletariat).

- Peasantry and Rural Petit Bourgeoisie: Mobilised en masse through the Aymara peasants of 29 provinces, the Interculturistas (a layer of small and medium-sized private agricultural producers) and the Departmental Federation of Mining Cooperatives (Fedecomin). These are sectors that do not identify with the abolition of wage labour.

- Political Opportunism: Political and social factions linked to “Evism” (supporters of Evo Morales) which do not represent a revolutionary alternative, but rather exploit and parasitise the anger of the rank and file to put pressure on the Executive and reposition themselves in the struggle for control of the bourgeois state administration. Although Evo Morales is not necessarily at the helm of this movement, for all practical purposes it is led by like-minded opportunist political currents, which are driving the demonstrations and blockades and demanding President Paz’s resignation.

- The Bourgeoisie State and its Administrators: Led by President Rodrigo Paz Pereira, backed by the judicial and police apparatus, and ready to deploy the Armed Forces for internal repression.
- The National and Transnational Bourgeoisie: Represented by the agricultural, agro-industrial (particularly in Santa Cruz), export, tourism and poultry sectors. Behind the scenes, large capitalist consortia and imperialist interests coveting the country’s gas, minerals and lithium reserves are at work.

The working class and oppressed sectors taking part in the protests are resorting to their traditional methods of struggle, combining strikes in the mines and schools with massive road blockades, with over 67 traffic disruption points recorded nationwide. This strategy has resulted in an almost total blockade of the main urban centres in the west, paralysing inter-departmental transport and halting the flow of goods. The bourgeois state’s response has been through judicial criminalisation, labelling the protest as “illegal” or “seditious”, combined with the use of military force.

The Bolivian capitalist state’s response to the workers’ uprising has combined police terror with a legal siege. At the time of this update, the combined forces of the Bolivian Police and the Armed Forces – mobilised exceptionally for internal repression to clear major roads – have acted with extreme violence. So far, there have been at least four deaths indirectly attributed to the logistics blockade and ambulance delays, in addition to the direct victims of recent violent road clashes. Dozens of workers, protesters and community members have been injured by tear gas, rubber bullets and physical assaults during the clashes on the western routes. Dozens of strikers are facing criminal prosecution, charged with “sedition” or “illegal strike” by the capitalist regime’s judicial apparatus.

The state of the country’s economy and its impact on workers

The Bolivian economy is mired in a crisis characterised by stagnation and high inflation, which is the local reflection of the general crisis of overproduction of capital at the international level. After entering a so-called “technical recession” in the second half of 2025 (ending that year with a GDP of -0.5%), projections for 2026 point to a severe contraction of -3.2% in GDP. Traditional extractive industries (gas and mining), the mainstays of state revenue, are suffering drastic declines due to the depletion of wells and a lack of investment.

This macroeconomic outlook translates into a brutal assault on the living conditions and reproduction of the workforce. After closing 2025 with 20.2% inflation, the cost of the basic family basket continued to rise in 2026. Essential foodstuffs (bread, meat, vegetables) are facing steep price rises due to a shortage of foreign currency and import problems. The government of Rodrigo Paz Pereira set the National Minimum Wage at 3,300 bolivianos (a nominal increase of 20%) through the PEPE Programme (Extraordinary Programme for Protection and Equity). Real wages have been decimated, with an estimated loss of nearly 60% of real purchasing power accumulated over the past year. The nominal increase is fictitious in the face of the actual devaluation in the markets.

However, the labour market is composed mainly of informal workers. The informal sector accounts for the vast majority of the country’s employed or underemployed workforce. This immense contingent comprises self-employed workers and day labourers. They live from hand to mouth just to survive. They constitute the urban sub-proletariat and those workers deprived of the means of production who sell their labour power on a day-to-day basis. They do not exploit the labour of others, lack capital, and their sole source of subsistence is their own labour. Historically, they belong to the ranks of the exploited class and suffer acutely from the direct effects of inflation and shortages caused by crises of accumulation. For this segment of workers, there is no guarantee of a minimum wage or any other form of labour rights.

Small and Medium-sized Entrepreneurs or Traders (Petty Bourgeoisie): Although they operate in conditions of legal informality, these individuals possess small means of production, goods or commercial capital. Their economic goal is not mere wage-based survival, but the realisation of commercial profit and private accumulation. They frequently exploit, either formally or

informally, family members or precarious wage earners. Their class position inclines them politically towards reaction: they reject strikes and workers’ blockades because these halt the circulation of their goods and threaten their small property, demanding from the bourgeois state order, credit, subsidies and social peace to continue their commercial activities.

Although the informal sector formally rejects the strike out of necessity for subsistence, it is suffocated by shortages and the lack of transport caused by the strike. Within its multi-class approach, the COB incorporates into its demands the grievances with which this sector of the petty bourgeoisie can identify.

Working conditions and the working environment have deteriorated to the extreme. The nominal increase in the minimum wage to 3,300 bolivianos is a mockery in the face of the real cost of living, forcing the working class to extend their actual working hours (through multiple jobs, underemployment and informality) to compensate for the 60% loss of their purchasing power.

Demands put forward by the strike leaders
The list of demands presented by the COB bureaucracy brings together more than 112 labour and political demands. The core of the trade union federations’ demands can be summarised in the following points:

1. Indexed Wage Increase: Demand for a real wage increase directly indexed to the current cost of the basic family basket, rejecting official caps and the government’s cosmetic increases. This demand has been overshadowed by claims from small and medium-sized transport and retail business owners, as well as from peasants and indigenous people.

2. Repeal of anti-worker regulations or those affecting the peasantry: A resounding rejection of the educational decentralisation measures implemented against the teaching profession. Contempt for the Executive’s half-hearted manoeuvres (such as the repeal of Law 1720, which allowed small agricultural holdings to be converted into financial assets recognised by the banking sector), deeming them insufficient and demanding the immediate dismissal of the ministers responsible for fiscal adjustment.

3. Fuel Supply and Quality: Demand from the heavy and urban transport sector for an immediate solution to the logistical shortages and the appalling quality of the fuel distributed, which is ruining their vehicles. Demands from small and medium-sized transport businesses.

Although some economic demands were put forward by the workers, expressing the immediate needs of the working class, the COB leadership gave its list of demands a distinctly multi-class, corporatist and reformist character. They do not challenge the root of capitalist exploitation or private ownership of the means of production; they limit the struggle to a distributive struggle within the framework of bourgeois legality.

But ‘Evism’ quickly pushed the demand for President Paz’s resignation and the calling of early presidential elections to the forefront of this movement, pushing the other demands into the background. This placed the movement on an insurrectionary footing, but not an insurrection against capitalism, rather for its continuation, under the guise of a change of government, whilst maintaining bourgeois democracy. Thus, should the insurrectionary tendency within the movement strengthen, the possible outcomes arising from this situation are: a) the retention of the current government, following negotiations with the striking movement; b) the president’s resignation, the appointment of a government of national salvation, and the calling of early elections; c) a coup d’état to halt the insurgent movement and militarily shield the ongoing fiscal austerity measures (Decree 5516). But in all these possible outcomes, the bourgeoisie will remain in power, whether it governs with the support of right-wing parties, or of opportunist left-wing parties such as the MAS, the ‘Evis’ faction and similar groups (‘social movements’ and the COB), or by placing control of the government in the hands of a military junta.

On Wednesday 20 May, President Paz announced a reshuffle of his cabinet, assuring that it would improve communication with the various social sectors.

Likewise, the president dismissed the protesters, whom he called vandals, and criticised political forces which he did not name, but with clear reference to Evo Morales and his supporters, who have an “ideological agenda” and are linked to “drug trafficking and illegal activities”. He reaffirmed his plan for macroeconomic adjustment, the restructuring of the state and the dismantling of mechanisms of corruption, which he claimed had developed over the last 20 years of MAS governments, calling for an “Economic and Social Council” in which he invited the social organisations involved in the conflict to participate. Even so, given the ongoing blockades, the president requested the creation of a “humanitarian corridor”, referring to the need to provide access in El Alto and La Paz to medical supplies, food and fuel, thereby indirectly acknowledging that the government does not have control of the situation. And in all his announcements, he did not even mention the issue of wages.

Whilst the president of the bourgeois government offers an “Economic and Social Council” (a cross-class conciliation forum), he categorically refuses to discuss the wages of the wage-earning workforce because his current historical mission is to sustain the rate of profit for employers through a fall in real wages.

On 21 May, a convoy of tankers carrying fuel and medical supplies reached La Paz under police escort. But the government still does not have control of the situation. The fact that the government has to resort to military aircraft to transport insufficient rations of chicken and pork, and depends on logistical aid from neighbouring bourgeois governments such as Argentina and Chile, demonstrates that the normal flow of capital circulation has been disrupted. The entry of tankers under armed escort is not a victory for order, but an exceptional operation that confirms that the territory remains surrounded by the bases of strike.

The strike movement, dominated by inter-classism and opportunism, remains firm in its demand for President Paz’s resignation and therefore refuses to engage in dialogue with a “dying government” and rejects the call to the Economic and Social Council, which it describes as a government manoeuvre, and which it does not wish to recognise or give oxygen to through its attendance.

The reactionary forces have also mobilised “in support of the government and in defence of democracy” in the capital. Meanwhile, international organisations have spoken out in support of the Paz government, as has the US government, which issued a statement backing Bolivia’s current government.

Positions of the various political, trade union and business groups
The strike has polarised the class camps on the national stage:

- The Bourgeois Government (Paz Pereira): Maintains an unyielding stance in defence of the economic austerity decrees (Supreme Decree 5516), arguing that they are necessary to curb so-called “stagflation”. It accuses the COB of promoting an “illegal” strike and brands the blockades as committing acts of “sedition” in the service of shadowy interests.

- The Business Community (Monopolies and Landowners): Expresses absolute rejection. The agricultural, poultry, export and tourism sectors report losses running into millions and demand a heavy-handed response from the state, claiming that the isolation of production centres “destroys formal employment” (that is, halts the extraction of surplus value).

- The Traditional Bourgeois Opposition and Civic Committees: Figures such as Carlos Mesa claim that the country is “held hostage by violent minorities”. For its part, the Pro-Santa Cruz Committee employs an anti-communist and opportunist narrative, accusing Evo Morales of using the protests to orchestrate a “coup d’état”. Both bourgeois factions (government and opposition) agree on the need to crush the workers’ resistance.
- The Opportunist Parties (“Evismo”): They ride on the legitimate conflict of the grassroots to channel discontent towards electoral solutions or palace power struggles, betraying the revolutionary potential of the strike to turn it into a bargaining chip for bourgeois politics.

- State Bodies (Ombudsman): They operate as institutional peacemakers and mediators, seeking to dilute the class conflict in fruitless round-table talks. They hypocritically warn against the use of the Armed Forces whilst attempting to preserve the bourgeois constitutional order.

- The historical betrayal and opportunism of the COB

To unravel the true nature of the Bolivian Workers’ Confederation (COB), it is essential to analyse its political behaviour over time, which reveals its total submission to the bourgeois state, depending on the faction in power. Under the reformist governments of Evo Morales and Luis Arce, the COB’s trade union bureaucracy acted as a shameless appendage of the executive, pacifying conflicts, assimilating corporate structures

and nipping in the bud any hint of independence or revolutionary initiative on the part of the proletariat. During those periods, workers’ demands were systematically stifled and sacrificed in the name of the stability of Andean ‘state capitalism’ and the false rhetoric of the ‘process of change’.

On the contrary, the current aggressiveness and the swift call for an indefinite general strike against the right-wing government of Rodrigo Paz do not stem from a sudden class-conscious awakening on the part of its treacherous leadership, but from its most abject political opportunism. The COB leadership has aligned itself organically with the bourgeois “Evista” faction (aligned with Evo Morales), which exploits and parasitises the legitimate anger of the rank-and-file workers.

The aim is not to destroy the capitalist state, but to wear down the current administrator (Paz Pereira) in order to force a reshuffle and reposition their allied political faction in the struggle for control of the fiscal and governmental apparatus. In doing so, the COB leadership confirms its historical counter-revolutionary role, transforming the workers’ demands contained in the inter-class list of demands into a mere bargaining chip in inter-bourgeois struggles. At the height of the conflict, the COB president went into hiding.

Prospects for the Bolivian proletariat in the absence of a revolutionary leadership

The historical drama of the Bolivian working class is once again laid bare in this indefinite national strike. The mining, education and transport proletariat is demonstrating a great fighting spirit, capable of paralysing the country’s vital arteries, united with indigenous sectors, peasants and the discontented petty bourgeoisie. However, the logistical effectiveness of the blockades contrasts with the political and ideological weakness of the organisations representing wage earners. This is evident in how wage and labour demands have been overshadowed by the call for the president’s resignation and by the demands of small business owners, such as the rejection of current fuel prices.

Lacking a revolutionary leadership with a clear programme for the overthrow of capitalism, the masses find themselves caught between the hammer of the government’s fiscal austerity and the anvil of reformist opportunism (“Evismo” and the COB bureaucracy). In the short term, the outlook is bleak: the strike risks petering out, being betrayed in exchange for nominal wage crumbs, or being used to facilitate the return of populist bourgeois factions that will continue the agenda of submission to finance capital.

The urgent need for the resumption of the class struggle

As Lenin taught in Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism, the monopolies and imperialist powers (whether from the Western or Eurasian bloc) vying for Bolivia’s lithium, gas and resources will never allow for the real emancipation of the working masses or their break with reformist paths, multi-classism or nationalism. Capitalism in crisis has no lasting concessions to offer. On the other hand, the workers’ movement must understand that its main enemy – the bourgeoisie – lies within Bolivia’s borders, and the call to confront the external enemy (whichever imperialist power) ends up being a distraction and a waste of energy by the discourse of that bourgeois ‘anti-imperialism’ of the opportunist left.

To break this vicious circle of exploitation and trade union betrayal, the following historic tasks are imperative:

1. Militant Affiliation to the International Communist Party: The current strike demonstrates that the spontaneous militancy and organisational strength of the COB are insufficient in the absence of the central subjective political factor: the vanguard party of the working class. Only the International Communist Party, firmly rooted in the Marxist doctrine of revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, can unify the scattered struggles of miners, teachers, drivers, urban sub-proletarians and wage workers in general, and lead these forces towards the overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

2. Continuation, expansion and intensification of the strike, eliminating minimum services and bringing in workers from sectors that have not yet joined. Refusal to participate in the Economic and Social Council convened by President Paz. Move from an insurrection as an expression of inter-bourgeois confrontation to a proletarian insurrection. Neither a “Government of National Salvation”, nor “early elections”, nor a “Military Dictatorship”. Workers’ insurrection for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

3. Whether the political course leads to the current government remaining in power or to a change of bourgeois government, the movement must uncompromisingly demand a general increase in wages, ensuring that this increase is applied and benefits even pensioners and informal workers. The General Strike must not be called off without securing a wage increase as the main demand to be made of the government and the employers.

4. The Break with Opportunism: The Bolivian proletariat must sever the ties that bind it to bourgeois factions of any stripe (Pazists or Evistas) and sweep away the collaboratorist trade union bureaucracy that transforms the list of demands into a list of betrayal, interclassism and inter-bourgeois confrontation.

5. The Resurgence of Genuine Class-Based Trade Unions: It is vital to rebuild trade unions that effectively unite the working class, without divisions based on nationality or trade, and which adopt methods of struggle such as indefinite strikes without minimum services. Unions that do not centre their organisation on workplaces but on local, regional and national organisation, bringing together active workers, pensioners and the unemployed, practising debate in assemblies and grassroots participation in the various committees required for the struggle. Genuine bodies for the defence of wages and resistance against capital.

Only the formation of the proletariat into an independent political party will make it possible to transform the current defensive resistance against capitalist exploitation and fiscal austerity into a revolutionary offensive for the destruction of the bourgeois state, the expropriation of transnational and national monopolies, and the launch of socialist transformation.

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Venezuela..

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pensioners, and the unemployed accumulate only misery and disease.

In March 2022, the government set the minimum wage at 130 bolivars per month, equivalent to \$30 at the time. The basic food basket for a family of five cost \$471, and the basic needs basket was estimated at \$940. At that time, the dollar was valued at 4.29 bolivars. On May 1st of this year, the government announced that the minimum wage would remain the same (130 bolivars or \$0.26), while the basic food basket and the basic needs basket would now cost \$692 and \$1,385, respectively. Thus, whether the employer pays the minimum wage or the slightly higher base salary offered by some institutions and companies, it is insufficient for workers to cope with the cost of living. Between March 2022 and May 2026, the dollar increased by 11,311.42%, the cost of the basic food basket by 50%, and the cost of basic necessities by 50%—a picture of rampant inflation without any increase in wages. The national government's announcement of a minimum income equivalent to \$240 per month (based on bonuses), even if it were to "benefit" all workers (which it is not), would barely cover 34.7% of the cost of the basic food basket and 17.33% of the cost of basic necessities.

But the announcement of a monthly income equivalent to \$240 for active workers and \$70 for pensioners, all based on bonuses, was, as in previous years, an informal announcement. After the first 20 days of May, the announcement had not been published in Venezuela's Official Gazette. This means that, from a legal standpoint, the Ce-

sticket (food voucher) and the War Bonus (which are the components of the announced \$240) remain technically unchanged, without an increase. The government will resolve this with some maneuver to pay the announced increase to the bonus for public sector workers. However, for example, when private school employees asked their employers to comply with the government announcements, the employers stated that they could not act without the official decree published in the Official Gazette, and furthermore, doing so would imply an increase in tuition fees, for which they would also "need government authorization." Thus we see how far these wretches, the "entrepreneurs", "the captains of business", "the leaders of private companies", can go in order to maintain and expand the surplus value they appropriate, paying workers with crumbs and, if necessary, failing to comply with any demagogic announcement of the bourgeois government.

On the other hand, even knowing it contradicts itself by announcing an increase only in bonuses and not in salaries, the government announced it would review the public sector salary scales. This announcement seems like a demagogic ploy by employers and union bosses alike to quell worker discontent by creating the expectation of a salary increase. But whether or not these salary scales are adjusted, workers can expect nothing more than crumbs from the government, which defends the interests of the bourgeoisie, nor can they expect strike calls from union leadership, which is complicit with the government and employers in this plundering of wages.

In this context, May Day arrived, with the government offering demagoguery, bread and circuses, and with the trade unions appearing in the

streets in small gatherings, without making much effort to mobilize active workers and without disguising their electoral ambitions and their hypocritical call to fight for wage increases.

Another important aspect that is often overlooked is that when undertaking the struggle for wage increases, it's crucial to consider that more than half of Venezuelan workers lack formal employment. They work without contracts, are self-employed, hold casual jobs, or are simply unemployed. This situation must be addressed in the demands, requiring the unemployed to receive a full salary. Similarly, retired and pensioned workers should receive payments equivalent to those of active workers. Therefore, workers must transform unions in the future, so that they don't just represent workers from the same company, but also from the same locality, bringing together active, unemployed, and retired workers of all trades and nationalities, who can then mobilize as a working class in their demands (something currently prohibited by bourgeois laws and which will only emerge with the resumption of the proletariat's class struggle). Trade unions must be a guarantee of class unity, and current unions, those recognized by bourgeois laws, are not designed for that purpose. The union must break free from the local straitjacket of organizing solely within the walls of the company, institution, or workplace. As the strike movement grows, as workers participate more widely and become aware of their power, they will find it necessary to break with opportunistic leaders and give rise to genuine class-based unions.

The struggle that must resurface requires high levels of grassroots worker participation. And only consistent leaders will foster this act-

ive participation. Holding assemblies at all levels must be emphasized. Assemblies without debate, without agreeing on actions to fight, without appointing committees to handle different tasks, to advise the union leadership, and even to remove leaders who fail to commit to the struggle are meaningless. Assemblies (and strikes) are the primary spaces for participation, and victory will be achieved with the broadest possible participation of wage earners.

Venezuelan labor unions lack a strong capacity for worker mobilization. The high-profile mobilizations called by Chavismo—which have dwindled over time—have always enjoyed the government's financial and coercive backing. Pro-government unions would be unable to mobilize many workers without this logistical and financial support. But the so-called "autonomous unionism" is also incapable of producing significant worker mobilizations, even if they unite in this effort. However, neither pro-government unionism nor "autonomous unionism" is truly willing or interested in mobilizing workers and leading them on strike. For Chavismo, mobilizing workers serves only to support the government (that is, the bourgeoisie), not to demand concessions, and strikes are rejected and viewed as conspiracy, terrorism, and "playing into the hands of the right wing." For "autonomous unionism," mobilizing workers is tantamount to opposing Chavismo and fighting for other bourgeois groups (with whom most of the leadership of this unionism is compromised) that seek to control the government. They demand workers' rights, but only as a complement to the demands for "more democracy," "defense of the Constitution," and "against the dictatorship" (referring to the Chavista gov-

ernment). Nor do they advocate strikes and mobilizations as the primary forms of struggle for workers. Both currents of unionism are always willing to sacrifice workers' interests for the smooth functioning of businesses and the national economy. They call for the defense of sovereignty and the homeland, which is tantamount to defending capitalist exploitation.

In comparison with the last 15 years, when the only dominant opposition slogan was "out with the dictatorship," recent calls for worker mobilization have focused somewhat more on demanding wage increases, but workers should not be fooled by these demagogues and traitors, who are really campaigning for the presidency.

The working class is mired in apathy, frustration, fear, and rejection of treacherous union leaders. This attitude has accumulated over decades of betrayal. But discontent persists despite being repressed not only by the police, the courts, and prisons, but primarily by this pro-business and treacherous unionism, which keeps workers demobilized, divided, and disorganized. And this discontent will always be the foundation for a resurgence of workers' struggles. Regardless of the immediate course of Venezuelan workers' mobilizations, in the medium term (well beyond May 1, 2026), they will have to confront the need to establish genuine class-based unions and the challenge of uniting all their struggles in an indefinite General Strike without minimum services.

India: Powerful Mass Strikes Emerge

Noida, an industrial city in India, was the scene of massive uprisings and a series of strikes last April that brought life to a standstill and led to the erection of barricades.

The pent-up anger over the new labor law—which took effect in November 2025 and permits work hours to be extended to 10-12 hours—combined with the spark of wage inequality, led to a massive explosion.

This uprising of the working class began with a sudden strike by contract workers at the Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India factory in Haryana State—a neighboring State to Noida—demanding a wage increase. By April 8, approximately 3,000 workers from a dozen firms in Haryana had gathered at IMT Manesar to support their fellow workers' struggle.

On April 9, when the Haryana State government responded to the protests with a 35% minimum wage increase, Noida workers—primarily in the garment, hosiery, and light manufacturing sectors—who were doing the same work as workers in the State of Haryana but earning nearly 6,000 rupees less per month, quickly realized this situation and took action to demand higher wages.

The demands of the workers in Noida, rooted in their own struggle for survival, can be listed as follows:

- A minimum wage of 20,000-26,000 rupees, as opposed to the current wages of 10,000-15,000 rupees in Uttar Pradesh, which have not been revised since 2014.

- A maximum 8-hour workday, contrary to the current norm of 12–16-hour shifts across all seven days of the week,

- Double overtime pay for hours worked beyond the standard, as mandated by law but routinely violated in practice,

- Payment of unpaid wages owed by several employers,

- Equal conditions for temporary and permanent staff, including written contracts, paid leave, and social security rights; the implementation of rights from which 58-67% of the workforce in Uttar Pradesh is completely deprived,

- The repeal or withdrawal of four new Labor Laws that unions claim have legalized 13-hour workdays and stripped them of their collective bargaining rights

Protests in Noida first began as work stoppages and mass peaceful sit-ins at over 82 factories. On April 9-10, workers gathered near the NSEZ metro station in Phase 2 (a major industrial hub and official industrial zone in Noida) and took to the streets demanding a minimum wage of at least 20,000 rupees to survive. Tensions between workers and management escalated on the second and third days.

The protests initially began spontaneously, without guidance from established unions, as workers were spurred into action by the impact of the wage hike in Haryana. At the grassroots level, the union organizations present from the outset included the Mazdoor Adhikar Sangharsh

Abhiyan (MASA)—an umbrella organization bringing together 16 small labor unions—along with Bigul Mazdoor Dasta, IFTU Sarvahara, Mazdoor Ekta Committee, All India Labor Reform Sangharsh Abhiyan (AILRSA), and Naujawan Bharat Sabha. These are unions operate outside the mainstream trade union federations, focusing particularly on informal and contract workers.

The strike and protests in Noida served as a rallying point for workers' struggles in various States across India. The strike in Noida triggered solidarity strikes at Motherson Group factories in Faridabad and Bhiwadi. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath characterized the incident as a "conspiracy" aimed at derailing workers' actions.

On the fifth day, April 13, the struggle turned violent; all major roads, including the NH-9, Sector 62, and Akshardham entry points, were blocked by approximately 45,000 workers. In Sector 84, vehicles were set on fire, and reports of stone-throwing and other violent incidents emerged; police used tear gas against the workers. Heavy security forces, including the PAC and RAF (the State's police force), were deployed to the area, and all police leaves were canceled.

Workers pouring into the streets voiced the harsh conditions of the class struggle against capital; they rebelled against 12- to 16-hour shifts, unpaid wages, and the systematic stripping of their rights needs by the bourgeoisie, leaving them with no security. One worker summarized the plight of his class during the protests: "Rent is 5,000 rupees. When you add food, transportation, and the children's education, it's impossible to survive on this salary".

Police violence peaked on April 13-14; over 350 workers were arrested. The detained workers were subjected to mistreatment. This violence will be etched into the memory of the proletariat and, like any counterrevolutionary force, will face its reckoning sooner or later.

As of April 16, most factories had resumed operations, and the protests had transformed into scattered, contained gatherings. Thus, the intense phase of the uprising lasted approximately one week (April 9-16). Outside the industrial zones, domestic workers in Noida officially joined the protests, demanding wage increases and better working conditions. This shows how, with a more organized and militant core at the forefront, the entire working class—even those workers who are most scattered and disorganized due to their working conditions—can come together in struggle.

On Saturday, April 17, the Uttar Pradesh Government officially announced revised minimum wages for specific jobs across the State. These wages were published in accordance with Section 3(b) of the India States and Union Territories Industrial Disputes Act of 1947 and superseded the previous wage decision dated March 25, 2026. Although the protests were suppressed, the wage-related demands were addressed to re-

duce the protests, and significant increases were applied to the wages. The increases were differentiated based on workers' skill levels.

Percentage increase in revised wages compared to previous wages

Unskilled: ₹11,313/month → ₹13,690/month (~21%)

Semi-skilled: ₹12,445/month →

₹15,059/month (~21%)

Skilled: ₹13,940/month → ₹16,868/month (~21%)

These figures fall well short of the ₹20,000–₹26,000 demanded by workers and unions. Deeper structural issues—such as the absence of written contracts, lack of social security, four Labor Laws, and the criminalization of protests—remain entirely unresolved. As of the end of April, more than 350 workers remain in custody. Seven preliminary investigation reports have been filed, and lawyers have reported that multiple charges have been added to prevent their release on bail.

From April 30 to May 8, Section 163 of the Indian Penal Code (restrictions on public assembly) was enforced across Gautam Buddha Nagar, covering the Labor Day period. Restrictions affected the International Workers' Day, to avoid workers demonstrations in this day.

Although bourgeois left-wing organizations were not very effective in the strikes, they attempted to influence workers with their own opportunist lines. As we noted in EKPI7 (TICP 65):

“But today in India, as everywhere, political and trade union opportunism prevails, which blocks or diverts the motion of all those who have been disinherited in the defense of the national interest and the preservation of bourgeois power. The strength of the proletariat as a class, the only potentially revolutionary one, lies not exclusively in the number, but by the sound consistency of its defensive organizations and their political direction, which must end the intransigent struggle against the bosses and their State. This will only happen when one of their minorities, the most advanced elements of the proletariat class, are recognized in the revolutionary communist party”.

The rise in oil and gas prices will lead to higher inflation in the coming months, making the wage increases won through these struggles—which were already less than what was demanded—insufficient to meet the needs of the Indian working class, who, along with workers around the world, will once again take up the fight for their immediate interests.

Prime Minister Modi's statements on Monday, May 11, in which he called for a “collective national effort,” asserting that “... Whenever the country has faced a war or any other serious crisis, every citizen has fulfilled their responsibilities... Even today, it is necessary for all of us to unite and fulfill our responsibility...” already sound like a threat to the working class, warning them not to take up the struggle again and to meekly accept further sacrifices for the supposed

greater good of the Nation—an ideological smokescreen behind which, in every country, the social privilege and political domination of the bourgeoisie are concealed.

The only way for workers to break these strike bans and police violence and confront the capitalist economic crisis is to organize in combative class unions under the leadership of the Communist Party and to overthrow bourgeois rule in India and throughout the world.

Noida, an industrial city in India, was the scene of massive uprisings and a series of strikes last April that brought life to a standstill and led to the erection of barricades.

The pent-up anger over the new labor law—which took effect in November 2025 and permits work hours to be extended to 10-12 hours—combined with the spark of wage inequality, led to a massive explosion.

This uprising of the working class began with a sudden strike by contract workers at the Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India factory in Haryana State—a neighboring State to Noida—demanding a wage increase. By April 8, approximately 3,000 workers from a dozen firms in Haryana had gathered at IMT Manesar to support their fellow workers' struggle.

On April 9, when the Haryana State government responded to the protests with a 35% minimum wage increase, Noida workers—primarily in the garment, hosiery, and light manufacturing sectors—who were doing the same work as workers in the State of Haryana but earning nearly 6,000 rupees less per month, quickly realized this situation and took action to demand higher wages.

The demands of the workers in Noida, rooted in their own struggle for survival, can be listed as follows:

- A minimum wage of 20,000-26,000 rupees, as opposed to the current wages of 10,000-15,000 rupees in Uttar Pradesh, which have not been revised since 2014.

- A maximum 8-hour workday, contrary to the current norm of 12–16-hour shifts across all seven days of the week,

- Double overtime pay for hours worked beyond the standard, as mandated by law but routinely violated in practice,

- Payment of unpaid wages owed by several employers,

- Equal conditions for temporary and permanent staff, including written contracts, paid leave, and social security rights; the implementation of rights from which 58-67% of the workforce in Uttar Pradesh is completely deprived,

- The repeal or withdrawal of four new Labor Laws that unions claim have legalized 13-hour workdays and stripped them of their collective bargaining rights

Protests in Noida first began as work stoppages and mass peaceful sit-ins at over 82 factories. On April 9-10, workers gathered near the NSEZ metro station in Phase 2 (a major industrial hub and official industrial zone in Noida) and took to the streets demanding a minimum wage of at least 20,000 rupees to survive. Tensions between workers and management escalated on the second and third days.

The protests initially began spontaneously, without guidance from established unions, as workers were spurred into action by the impact of the wage hike in Haryana. At the grassroots level, the union organizations present from the outset included the Mazdoor Adhikar Sangharsh Abhiyan (MASA)—an umbrella organization bringing together 16 small labor unions—along with Bigul Mazdoor Dasta, IFTU Sarvahara, Mazdoor Ekta Committee, All India Labor Reform Sangharsh Abhiyan (AILRSA), and Naujawan Bharat Sabha. These are unions operate outside the mainstream trade union federations, focusing particularly on informal and contract workers.

The strike and protests in Noida served as a rallying point for workers' struggles in various States across India. The strike in Noida triggered solidarity strikes at Motherson Group factories in Faridabad and Bhiwadi. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath characterized the incident as a "conspiracy" aimed at derailing workers' actions.

On the fifth day, April 13, the struggle turned violent; all major roads, including the NH-9, Sector 62, and Akshardham entry points, were blocked by approximately 45,000 workers. In Sector 84, vehicles were set on fire, and reports of stone-throwing and other violent incidents emerged; police used tear gas against the workers. Heavy security forces, including the PAC and RAF (the State's police force), were deployed to the area, and all police leaves were canceled.

Workers pouring into the streets voiced the harsh conditions of the class struggle against capital; they rebelled against 12- to 16-hour shifts, unpaid wages, and the systematic stripping of their rights needs by the bourgeoisie, leaving them with no security. One worker summarized the plight of his class during the protests: "Rent is 5,000 rupees. When you add food, transportation, and the children's education, it's impossible to survive on this salary".

Police violence peaked on April 13-14; over 350 workers were arrested. The detained workers were subjected to mistreatment. This violence will be etched into the memory of the proletariat and, like any counterrevolutionary force, will face its reckoning sooner or later.

As of April 16, most factories had resumed operations, and the protests had transformed into scattered, contained gatherings. Thus, the intense phase of the uprising lasted approximately one week (April 9-16). Outside the industrial zones, domestic workers in Noida officially joined the protests, demanding wage increases and better working conditions. This shows how, with a more organized and militant core at the forefront, the entire working class—even those workers who are most scattered and disorganized due to their working conditions—can come together in struggle.

On Saturday, April 17, the Uttar Pradesh Government officially announced revised minimum wages for specific jobs across the State. These wages were published in accordance with Section 3(b) of the India States and Union Territories Industrial Disputes Act of 1947 and superseded the previous wage decision dated March 25, 2026. Although the protests were suppressed, the wage-related demands were addressed to reduce the protests, and significant increases were applied to the wages. The increases were differentiated based on workers' skill levels.

Percentage increase in revised wages compared to previous wages

Unskilled: ₹11,313/month → ₹13,690/month (~21%)

Semi-skilled: ₹12,445/month → ₹15,059/month (~21%)

Skilled: ₹13,940/month → ₹16,868/month (~21%)

These figures fall well short of the ₹20,000–₹26,000 demanded by workers and unions. Deeper structural issues—such as the absence of written contracts, lack of social security, four Labor Laws, and the criminalization of protests—remain entirely unresolved. As of the end of April, more than 350 workers remain in custody. Seven preliminary investigation reports have been filed, and lawyers have reported that multiple charges have been added to prevent their release on bail.

From April 30 to May 8, Section 163 of the Indian Penal Code (restrictions on public assembly) was enforced across Gautam Buddha Nagar, covering the Labor Day period. Restrictions affected the International Workers' Day, to avoid workers demonstrations in this day.

Although bourgeois left-wing organizations were not very effective in the strikes, they attempted to influence workers with their own opportunist lines. As we noted in EKPI7 (TICP 65):

“But today in India, as everywhere, political and trade union opportunism prevails, which blocks or diverts the motion of all those who have been disinherited in the defense of the national interest and the preservation of bourgeois power. The strength of the proletariat as a class, the only potentially revolutionary one, lies not exclusively in the number, but by the sound consistency of its defensive organizations and their political direction, which must end the intransigent struggle against the bosses and their State. This will only happen when one of their minorities, the most advanced elements of the proletariat class, are recognized in the revolutionary communist party”.

The rise in oil and gas prices will lead to higher inflation in the coming months, making the wage increases won through these struggles—which were already less than what was demanded—insufficient to meet the needs of the Indian working class, who, along with workers around the world, will once again take up the fight for their immediate interests.

Prime Minister Modi's statements on Monday, May 11, in which he called for a “collective national effort,” asserting that “... Whenever the country has faced a war or any other serious crisis, every citizen has fulfilled their responsibilities... Even today, it is necessary for all of us to unite and fulfill our responsibility...” already sound like a threat to the working class, warning them not to take up the struggle again and to meekly accept further sacrifices for the supposed greater good of the Nation—an ideological smokescreen behind which, in every country, the social privilege and political domination of the bourgeoisie are concealed.

The only way for workers to break these strike bans and police violence and confront the capitalist economic crisis is to organize in combative class unions under the leadership of the Communist Party and to overthrow bourgeois rule in India and throughout the world.

Russia: Chinese Workers on Strike

On April 12 and 13, several hundred Chinese workers employed at the Komsomolsk-on-Amur, a major industrial hub in Russia's Far East, marched from the factory to the city center. The petrochemical plant is owned by Rosneft, Russia's largest state-owned oil-owned company and one of the largest in the world. The workers are employed by Petro-Haihua, the Russian subsidiary of the Chinese Haihua Industrial Group, which worked under contract to Rosneft.

According to Russian officials, Rosneft terminated its contractual agreement with Petro-Hehua, citing "missed deadlines" and "poor workmanship." Rosneft reported at 73% decline in net profit in 2025 confirming, the state-owned giant's difficulties.

Following termination of the contract, Petro-Hehua stopped paying its workers' wages, leaving them stranded in their barracks in Russia. After a few days, the workers finally broke the deadlock and marched out of the camp. The demonstration was peaceful, and the workers carried signs in Russian and Chinese reading "No money" and "Putin, help us."

Evidently, the workers—lacking a union to promote solidarity among other workers in the

factory and the city, in a country at war—were trying to avoid attacking the authorities with these slogans. But in November 2021, a small number of Chinese workers organized a more violent demonstration for the same reason, storming the local Rosneft offices.

But "help" from the Russian bourgeois state came in the form of a large deployment of OMON forces, the Special Mobile Unit of the National Guard, which surrounded the camp, preventing anyone from leaving. Five workers who led the protest were arrested, accused of violating an article of the Administrative Code, "organizing a mass gathering in a public place." Two of them received fines of 10,000 and 50,000 rubles, respectively, while the fate remaining of the three remains unknown. The authorities downplayed the incident, claiming that the Chinese workers were "celebrating Easter."

The mayor of Komsomolsk-on-Amur, who had posted on social media that was engaged in engagement with workers and refinery management, later deleted the post. Regional authorities expressed their willingness to repatriate the workers to China, providing Petro-Hehua the initiated process.

This small workers' struggle is a fine example of how the Russian and Chinese bourgeoisie, presented by the politicals of Stalinist opportunism as better than the Western bourgeoisie, are actually completely identical. It's not a question of culture, ideological garb used to embellish national capitalist regimes, or religions: at every latitude and meridian, it's a question of economic interests, that is, of class, for which the oppressors and exploits then working class.

Chinese workers were first exploited by their "homegrown" industrial group and the Russian state-owned company, then abandoned by both and repressed by the Russian bourgeois state. Workers have no homeland because all national regimes are against them. Liberation from capitalism begins with the conquest of political power through revolution, and possibly without anything a country. But it is accomplished only with international revolution and the birth of a socialist republic that transcends and breaks down the confines of bourgeois national prisons.

who would be them face police.

The Way Forward

The approval of this anti-worker law necessitates a profound reorganization from below of the workers' movement in Argentina.

- Class-based program of demands: workers must unite around demands that reject all nationalism, defense of the homeland, the national economy, electoralism, and parliamentarism.

- Convergence in a Class-Based United Union Front: overcome the division imposed by the treacherous leadership of the unions, integrating workers of union affiliation. Employed, unemployed, precariously employed, and retired workers must join forces. Instead of limiting organization to the confines of the factories, promote local organization that integrates the class of workers. The Class-Based United Union Front also must be a space for fighting the opportunism and betrayal present in the labor movement and in the leadership of the current unions.

- An indefinite general strike extending to all sectors of the economy. The only language capital understands is a total production shutdown. Argentina mandates "essential services," which requires a minimum 75% shift.

- Abandon the Parliament the illusion: Both Parliament and the presidency are bourgeois institutions that defend capital.

Workers' emancipation must be the work of the workers!

Turkey: Current Union Struggles

In recent times, a significant increase has been observed in the influence of small, combative unions—operating outside the major confederations—among the working class in Turkey's current union struggles. With the number of workers participating in strikes led by these combative unions—which we have covered in this and previous issues—reaching around 10,000, BİRTEK-SEN (United Textile Workers Union) President Mehmet Türkmen and Bağışsız Maden-

İş (Independent Mine Workers Union) organizing specialists Başaran Aksu and Doğukan Akan have been arrested on charges of “spreading false information,” using their speeches exposing workers’ conditions as a pretext. On the other hand, the arrest of militant union leaders who view the prison as no different from a factory will not stop either the militant union movement or the rising workers’ struggles.

Polyak Mining Strike

In Izmir's Kınk district, where the combative Bağışsız Maden İş (Independent Mining Workers' Union) is organized, 1,243 workers at Polyak Mining began a work stoppage due to reasons such as wages not being paid in full and on time, unpaid back wages, and the failure to ensure occupational health and safety. On the 11th day of the action, when workers attempted to enter the mine, the gendarmerie intervened; three workers and Bağışsız Maden İş organizing specialist Başaran Aksu were detained, and workers were sprayed with pressurized water and pepper spray. However, a group of workers and union officials managed to enter the mine. As a result, an agreement was reached with the company; according to information from the union, the workers' wages were deposited into their accounts, production at the mine was suspended for three months, and the employer pledged to gradually rehire the 620 workers who wish to return to the mine if it reopens.

Teachers

Following a failed attempt in Urfa the previous day, the bloody school massacre in Maraş in April resulted in the deaths of around 10 students and one teacher and triggered the most effective teachers' strike in recent years took place at the call of the combative Private Teachers' Union, which operates outside the other confederations, and Eğitim Sen (Education and Science Workers Union - KESK). Teachers also staged protests in front of Ministry of National Educa-

tion offices in many provinces under the slogan “We don't want to die.” Eğitim Sen, which carried both legitimate class-based reactions and the influence of the opportunist left, called for the resignation of the Minister of National Education. This slogan not only reduced this horrific massacre—caused by capitalist society and alienation—to a single individual but also harbored the illusion that replacing that person with another like them would make any difference.

Other Struggles

185 workers dismissed from Mersin International Port Operations and the subcontractor Özgüneş Transportation for being members of TÜMTİS (All Transport Workers Union - Türk-İş) have been on strike in front of the port for nearly two months. Workers, whose shifts can last 10–12 hours, are forced to work like slaves for up to 20 hours when there is a lot of work, and when there is little work, they are sent home without receiving that day's wages. The employer fired the workers—many of whom suffer from back, neck, or groin hernias or respiratory illnesses due to working conditions—claiming he “couldn't secure a contract.”

Workers at GM Teknik Cam Endüstri ve Ticaret—which supplies glass to companies like Bosch, Gümüşdağ, Franke, and its own group company Silverline—and who are members of Kristal-İş (Glass, Cement, Ceramic and Soil Workers Union - Türk-İş), have been on strike for approximately 230 days after the employer offered 32,205 lira in response to their demand of 36,250 lira in the collective bargaining agreement. Throughout this process, workers—who have faced pressure from management to end the strike and had workers brought in from outside the city to replace them—continue their resistance.

GENERAL MEETING

International Party Meeting 24-25 January [RG 154]

Faced with the catastrophic failure of the bourgeois world and the revelation of all its lies, the Communist Party, the only refuge for the working class, is preparing tomorrow's explosive recovery

Continued from previous issue

The Agrarian Question: Capitalism

At this meeting, the second chapter of the work continued: we discussed commercial agriculture. From our " Fili del Tempo ," collected today in Comunismo no. 51, some key passages were read, including, at the beginning of the exposition: "The form given by capitalism to agriculture is that of a market, after having removed from the land, on the one hand, the "freed" worker and, on the other, the feudal lord, abolishing the inalienability of the fief and granting it to the bourgeois creditors, or competitors at auctions, partly selling it in lots to small and medium-sized farmers."

This historical process saw the emergence of various forms of agricultural production, still in existence today, accompanied by the powerful modern industrialization of the production of various manufactured goods and services. From the study "Property and Capital" in Prometeo: "We will recall how the bourgeoisie replaced the old feudal codes and investitures with a full application of 'Roman law' to private land ownership, in its protection and in its transmission, both hereditary and contractual. We will not repeat how the same set of articles applies to the dispossession of a peasant family from the land and to the ownership of thousands of hectares, and what the meaning of this arrangement is."

Continuing: "From Blanqui (History of Political Economy, 1839) Marx quotes this definition of bourgeois agriculture (as brilliant as his famous one: capitalism made land an article of commerce). Landed property emerged for the first time from the state of torpor in which the feudal system had kept it for so long. This was a real awakening for agriculture... (The land) now passed from the regime of mortmain to that of circulation."

Further on in the exposition we find: "Cultivated land is first divided into possessions, each of which may include a single or multiple businesses or companies, while only in rare exceptions can the opposite occur (smaller properties, larger business). By possession or estate, we mean a collection of adjacent or not very distant lands belonging to a single natural or legal person; and by agricultural enterprise, holding, or cultivation unit, all cultivated land managed by a single entrepreneur: whether owner, landowner, tenant, or sharecropper."

Therefore, the question of small or large-scale cultivation must be related to the size of the farm, not to the size of the property, to what Lenin called the monopoly of farm ownership, not the monopoly of land ownership. Abolishing the latter could be a bourgeois program, which would mean, after releasing the land from the market, freed from feudal lordship rights, removing it from the market and placing it under state ownership. But abolishing the monopoly of property is only possible for land; abolishing the monopoly of farm ownership, on the other hand, is a revolutionary and communist task.

Continuing from the chapter: "He, She and the Other (Land, Money and Capital)" we repeated:

«All the research of critical communism is aimed at establishing the cause and the laws of the appropriation of other people's labor, of the social relationship whereby certain men and groups of men in successive historical societies provide their labor and worked, while there are other men and other groups who live by not providing work and by consuming in various ways what they have not produced (...) All Marxism is the theory of surplus value and in a more general sense of overwork, extended to all eras and not only to the capitalist one, and of the future forms of provision of overwork for "all" human society» (The Communist Program , "The Program of the Proletarian Revolution")

«In the summary definition of the search for the causes of overwork, if one neglects the historical method, one can fall into misunderstanding by considering that the whole system derives from a condemnation of the "exploitation of man by man", almost as if it were a moral position, which strikes that relationship as a crime, in every place and at every time, for its qualified essence and without regard to its extension in quantity (...) Communism will prevent an individual or even a part of society or even the State from being able to say to the worker: you will not be able to feed yourself if you do not perform the part of the work paid the right price (necessary work) when and where you are told, to crystallize your overwork there (...)

«The history of the theories that Marx developed before constructing his own, ours, is set out after it and is dotted step by step with luminous explanations of our own interpretation of all forms of overwork and, moreover, as in the other parts of Capital, with powerful glimpses that illustrate the revolutionary program and the communist social form.

«The oldest concept is that of the yield of cultivated land, since its first theorists were far from being able to see that even in this one uses,

as we have seen, not "free" natural force, but always the work of men, who provide it as much as they live and live as much as they feed themselves».

The chapter continues with a comprehensive and crystal-clear analysis of the combination of fruits and exploitation in capitalized land rent, "the first celebration of the marriage between Miss Earth and Mr. Money." This section emphasizes: "But good cultivation of agricultural land is what makes it fruitful, not exploited, that is, does not deeply affect or destroy its future fertility: which, by gradually reducing rent, would deprive that land of its value 'in common commerce' or significantly reduce it. Our Italian word 'exploitation', which in modern times we apply to the entrepreneur's profit at the expense of wage earners, shows that every theory of overwork begins with a solution to the problem of land rent."

He followed the reading of the various passages on ground rent by quoting Marx: "According to the Physiocrats, ground rent continues to be the sole income of the nation; nature alone nourishes it and God alone creates it. Wages and interest merely transfer from one hand to another, always to other hands, what nature has given in the form of ground rent [...] The wealth of the nation is the capacity of the soil to annually supply this ground rent.

All things that have value, if we go back to the components and foundations of their value—we mean, however, exchange value—are simply products of nature. Although labor has given these things a new form, and thus increased their value, this value nevertheless consists solely of the sum of the values of all the products of nature that have been destroyed in order to create this value in the new form, that is, consumed by the worker or employed in some other way.

And again: "This work [in agriculture proper] is therefore real and it alone is productive, because it creates independent organic bodies. Transformation work merely mechanically or chemically modifies existing bodies."

It was concluded that, on the contrary, in Marxism: «To establish the terms of the agrarian question it must be affirmed that in capitalist times the land rent is a part taken from social surplus labor as compensation for the monopoly of the land by its owners.

«At the beginning of the capitalist cycle, the landowners claim to be at the head of society; at its end, after having been relegated to a subordinate position, they can even be eliminated, without the life of the capitalist and wage-based mode of production having yet ended».

Philippines: A Mature capitalism

The report – here is the first chapter – aims to provide an essential description of the country and the many challenges that the working class faces there.

Geography

The Philippines is an archipelago of more than 7,600 islands and islets, divided into three main groups: Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, with a total area of 300,000 square kilometers. It borders Japan and Taiwan to the north, China to the northwest, Vietnam to the west, Malaysia to the southwest, Indonesia to the south, and Palau to the southeast.

The Philippines' geology is characterized by its location at the western edge of the Pacific Ring of Fire. The terrain is a rugged landscape of mountains, hills, and plains, with a number of active and inactive volcanoes. The coastal and inland plains provide the Philippines' agricultural staples, particularly rice, corn, and coconut.

It is surrounded by strategically important seaways that influence its global economy and politics. To the north, between the Philippines and the island of Taiwan, lies the Luzon Strait, the main passage for civilian and military ships entering and leaving the Pacific Ocean. To the west lies the South China Sea, rich in vast undersea resources of natural gas and crude oil.

History

The Philippines is caught between the interests of two of the world's major imperialist powers: China and the United States.

Since the end of World War II, in accordance with the terms of the Japanese Empire's surrender, China has claimed the entire South China Sea, including all its islands and resources, as its national territory. Since 1994, the Chinese have asserted their claim by secretly establishing military sites and bases on groups of islets and reefs

in the South China Sea, the Spratlys and Paracels. In the early 2010s, they occupied the disputed islands, forcing the Philippine garrisons stationed there to abandon them.

In response, the bourgeois government of the late former President Benigno S. Aquino III filed a complaint against the Chinese government before the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague. In 2016, the CPA ruled in favor of the Philippines, a ruling that China rejected and refused to abide by. Under his successor, former President Rodrigo R. Duterte, the Philippines adopted a pro-China stance, renouncing all military and trade agreements with the United States and allowing China a free hand in the South China Sea. With the inauguration of President Ferdinand "Bongbong" R. Marcos Jr. in 2022, however, the bourgeois Philippine government once again reversed its foreign policy orientation toward the United States, prompting another round of Chinese aggression against Philippine naval forces and fishermen.

Spain ceded the Philippines to the United States for \$20 million in the Treaty of Paris of 1898, following the Spanish-American War. The United States, the Philippines' colonial power from 1901 to 1946, is now its "best friend" and "natural ally." However, since independence was "granted" in 1946, the United States has continued to exert great influence, manipulating elections and conducting sabotage and espionage operations to remove and destabilize hostile governments.

The Cold War-era Mutual Defense Treaty was intended to protect the Philippines, and American interests, from Chinese aggression in the Taiwan Strait, as well as giving the United States the ability to intervene in the "communist" rebellion then underway in the country's mountainous regions.

The Visiting Forces Agreement is much more recent, replacing the permanent U.S. military bases established during the American colonial period. It provides for annual joint military exercises.

In addition to the United States, the Philippines is also working on similar agreements with Australia, Canada, France, Great Britain, and other Western countries under American influence. Former President Duterte's government succeeded in distancing the Philippines from the United States for the first time in modern history. Only the change of government in 2022 opened the way for American imperialists to regain their former position of power.

The bourgeois government of President Marcos Jr., eager to counter Chinese aggression, reinstated the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) between the Philippines and the United States. The EDCA allowed the United States to establish military installations in the archipelago, pledging to cover the costs and finance economic development around the occupied areas. Following the renewal and resumption of the EDCA, the United States wasted no time in building installations in four key locations on the northern island of Luzon, all targeting China.

Historically, for Washington, the Philippines was and continues to be part of the "first island chain," strung along the continent's eastern and southern coasts, subordinated to American imperialism to contain China's maritime expansion. Other coastal nations—Japan, South Korea, and Vietnam—along with the United States, quickly moved to challenge China for control of the South China Sea. Australia also plays a crucial role in the dispute, having even signed a pact with the Philippines, along with Great Britain, France, and other Western powers, for joint patrols in the area. Obviously, global imperialist forces will continue to exert pressure on bourgeois Philippine governments, and the scenario could change again in the future.

Bourgeois politics

Under the 1987 Constitution, the Republic of the Philippines is a presidential government. The President is the head of state and government and commands the armed forces. He is elected by direct popular vote for a non-renewable six-year term. Legislative power is exercised by a Congress composed of two chambers: the Senate (upper house) and the House of Representatives (lower house).

Internal bourgeois politics is polarized between four main party coalitions: the Marcosists, the Dutertes, the Liberal Opposition, and the Left Opposition.

The Marcosist camp, called the "loyalists," brings together the parties of the vast majority of political dynasties.

The Duterte supporters, also known as the "Duterte Diehard Supporters" or "DDs," are led by Vice President Sara Duterte and her brothers, Congressman Pulong Duterte and Davao City Mayor Baste Duterte. The main political party in the Duterte camp is the Partido Demokratiko Pilipino, the party of former President Duterte.

Duterte supporters generally have a pro-China stance, showing disinterest in the South China Sea dispute, arguing that the Philippines'

baseless claims were fomented by the United States and that it would be better for the country to simply cede the islets to China and restore normal diplomatic relations.

Liberals trace their ideological and institutional roots to the figures and forces that led the 1986 uprising that overthrew the Marcos dictatorship. They do not officially side with either China or the United States, but historically and currently they lean toward the latter, especially on the dispute over the South China Sea.

The left-wing opposition, particularly the Socialists and National Democrats, condemns both imperialist powers and advocates an ultranationalist and isolationist stance, clearly bourgeois and anti-worker. Duterte has seen his influence significantly diminish and his popularity among the electorate plummet. Liberals have positioned themselves as the Dutertes' main enemies, with their usual demands for "accountability," "justice," and the protection of "human rights."

In the Philippines, power struggles within the ruling class are dirty, bloody, and chaotic affairs. At the local level, elections are sham, as the scions of political dynasties simply swap seats in their respective local governments. To manipulate voters, they employ a system of corruption, with aid packages, known as "ayudas," in cash or in kind, distributed to the population, often with the names and faces of politicians on them, before and after election periods. Those who dare to challenge the dynasties on their soil are intimidated or even eliminated, thus preventing any opposition to their rule. Electoral alliances and party loyalties are fluid and constantly evolving.

Economy and industry

The Philippine economy is based primarily on services and agriculture, with industry playing a minor role. Much of the country's agricultural production is exported. Rice is the main crop, along with fruits and vegetables. The Philippines is classified as a "newly industrialized country." The largest and most profitable industry is electronics, which accounted for at least half of exports in 2024. Other important industries include automotive, mining and metallurgy, food processing, and pharmaceuticals, among others.

Over the past year, the industry has shifted toward higher value-added products, seeking to compete with Vietnam and Thailand not only on labor costs but also on specialization. The industry contributes approximately 25-30% of the national GDP.

The Philippines is one of the world's largest producers of nickel (essential for electric vehicle batteries), a sector that has expanded rapidly over the past three years thanks to global demand. Economically, the Philippines is largely subordinate to the United States, its main trading partner. With the Philippine peso pegged to the US dollar, the national currency's strength depends entirely on the greenback.

The Philippines also maintains close economic partnerships with ASEAN countries and the European Union.

The Classes

The social and class structure of the Philippines is complex and reflects an economy in transition, where technological modernization coexists with an agricultural system that in some areas remains almost feudal.

Many are forced to work away from their families, especially those who have not completed their studies.

Here is the breakdown based on the latest data available from the Philippine Statistics Authority.

The active labor force in the Philippines amounts to 50-52 million. Wage earners represent 62-63% of this (32 million). Over 60% are employed in services (business, retail, tourism) and industry (manufacturing, electronics). This is a highly heterogeneous group, ranging from factory workers in Special Economic Zones (PEZAs) to call center employees. Self-employed/informal workers (street vendors, taxi drivers, small artisans) make up 26-28% of the workforce, a segment of the "urban precariat."

Agriculture employs 22-24% of the workforce, 11-12 million people.

Within these there is a clear distinction between those who own the land and those who work it:

An estimated 3-4 million farmers own a small plot of land. Most of these are smaller than 2-3 hectares. Many are beneficiaries of the agrarian reform (CARP), but often lack the capital necessary to modernize and live in a subsistence economy.

Agricultural wage earners (landless peasants) number 5-6 million. Day laborers, they often work on large sugar, coconut, or banana plantations (haciendas) (especially in Mindanao and Negros). They represent the poorest segment of the population.

Sharecroppers and tenant farmers number 1.5-2 million. They work land that isn't theirs and repay the owner with a portion of the harvest (often 50% or more). This system persists despite decades of reform efforts.

Among wage earners, there are obviously different levels of remuneration depending on the sector. There is a general disparity between the urban and rural working classes. The unemployment rate in the Philippines is currently quite low compared to the past, standing at around 4.4% in November 2025: 2.25 million. However, we must also consider the underemployed: the critical number in the Philippines is not the number of unemployed, but rather those whose wages are insufficient to live on. It is estimated that at least 5 million workers are forced to supplement their insufficient income with second jobs. This is typical in the agricultural and informal trade sectors.

The ruling class is a small percentage of the population. Yet collectively, it exercises absolute control over the state apparatus and its means of production. Most can trace their lineage to prominent families who gained power during the Spanish colonial period. The transition from Spanish to American imperialist control did not diminish their influence in the slightest; on the contrary, it strengthened it, as the new colonial government elevated them to the role of local overseers and key lobbyists for its interests in the islands. Even after the United States "granted" independence in 1946, these families, now dubbed "political dynasties," maintained a de facto monopoly on government, passing their positions from father to son and through kinship. It is no coincidence that as of 2026, the vast majority of all provinces, cities, municipalities, and even barangays (neighborhoods, villages) in the Philippines are still governed by a political dynasty.

The Armed Forces

The armed forces consist of 150,000 active-duty soldiers and 1.5 million reservists. They are supported and equipped primarily by the United States and its allies in East Asia. Japan and South Korea provide the majority of the Navy and Coast Guard vessels. The armed forces, inevitably, have always been at the service of the ruling class. Since their inception, they have been involved in a series of brutal conflicts against self-proclaimed communist rebels, as well as against secessionist movements in Mindanao and the Cordillera region, in both urban and rural areas. Groups and organizations affiliated with the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary left are constantly threatened and subjected to persecution by armed forces agents.

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North American Section Activity

The Party in North America continues to intervene on the union field as our article in the For the Class Union section indicates. We continue to also hold regular monthly public meetings both in person in Portland Oregon and online, covering current events, political theory, and historical topics. Recent meetings have covered topics of the Iran War, the conflict in Venezuela, Opportunism in the Labor Movement and our next meeting in June will focus on China.

The section now maintains six active work study groups covering economics, race and the agrarian question, labor history, communist party history, Marxist theory, and critique of democracy. Comrades read texts, produce written summaries, and report their findings at dedicated study sessions held after sectional meetings which are then used to assist in the production of our longer written works.

Over the last two months, the channel released 10 new English-language videos, along with additional content in Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and French. The channel now hosts 37 videos on the website.

Translation work produced 11 newly published texts since the last general meeting, including 3 from the Marxist Economics Index, 3 from the Imperialism and Oil Index, 4 from the Marxist Theory of Knowledge Index, and 1 miscellaneous text these are all available on our website.

We additionally regularly hold meetings with new comrades who approach the Party to integrate them into our ongoing historic work in de-

A meeting to present the party to new comrades

To help young members actively integrated into the party's vibrant international organization, at a meeting on Saturday, April 4, we presented a summary of what our Party is and whates it in the concrete work it currently out.

The Party is not a simple association of in-

dividuals, held together by a sum of personal opinions. It is the embodiment of the historical and programmatic continuity of the communist movement. The Party exists not as an organization, but because we inherit and transmit a program shaped by past struggles and the objective evolution of the class struggle. What distinguishes our Party is the method by which it functions and the historical program it defends.

The Party is governed by organic centralism. It is the form of centralized unity of action that is naturally a shared program—visible to all—and not from any kind of formal democratic mechanism or bureaucratic command. Where democratic centralism depends on internal parliaments, voting, and competition of opinions, organic centralism is based on the unquestioning acceptance of the program—our doctrine, written by the history of modern class struggle with the blood of proletarians, by the lessons learned from multiple counterrevolutions, and which in the experimental of history has proven immutable. This program guides the Party, not the center, not the rank and file.

Unity of action emerges organically from shared sharedcendence to adhere a historically rooted political line, and and positions and responsibilities derives not from any vote count, but from the Party's needs and the capabilities of the characters. In this sense, no one lead and all are led, guided by the immutable Marxist doctrine.

The party is not a school, a club, or a reading group. It is a living, breathing organism. An indivisible unit parts develop according to the objective needs by the class struggle and the collective maturation of its members.

For this reason, we reject all forms of culturalism and educationalism. New comrades are not required to pass any exams, a certain knowledge of Marxism, or show off their reading. What matters is iscence adhere to the program and active participation in the collective work.

The Communist Party is not an internally undifferentiated body and has its own hierarchies. But these are not based on a predetermined role assigned; they arise from the recognition of the skills and to willingness work of individual comrades, and are not fixed. Based on the evidence of shared work and its growth, comrades, young and old, join together and alternate in various tasks, across time and space, without the need for any approval from above or below.

The party is not a sort of club for "Marxist scholars" to which intellectuals contribute their

"training." The party is a disciplined collective commitment, measured over years and decades, an effort behind-the-some fruits of us, maybe all, will not see in our lifetimes, entrusting the continuation of the struggle to future generations of communists. The disciplined and impersonal nature of our method does not discourage us from our small numbers and current limited influence on the class. The party is a compact nucleus of comrades who understands that struggle is easy nor yields immediate visible results, but is the necessary work of defending and spreading the explosive Marxist doctrine all the world.

In the current state of disorientation of the class struggle, the work of the party tends to fulfill all its functions, quantitative proportionally to its size.

As an International Party, one of its central tasks is the translation, editing, and publication of our texts in all languages spoken by the proletariat. In the English-language section alone, in North America and the United Kingdom, more than 80 texts have been translated in the past year. The person responsible for this work tracks, records, and typesets the translations for publication in print and on the website.

Our work continues through intervention in the unions—and in all mass organizations in which only proletarians can participate and which do not discriminate based on religious beliefs, political convictions, etc., but on the sole solely basis of wage earnings—with the aim of presenting the communists' immediate direction of struggle to the working class, disseminating the Party line, and bytending our influence among the masses of organized workers. Party militants within the unions form communist factions, rallying the most active and combative workers around them. Within the Unions, our task is overthrow to the reactionary union bureaucracy and the party's leadership within it.

This is by determined the strength and magnitude of the class struggle, and not achieved by simply by our will. It is important, however, that the party's voice be present all-out the vicissitudes of the class, struggle with the union faction—the party that the majority of workers know—remaining a light for the guiding class.

We must demonstrate how the tactics of the union fail bureaucracy or are insufficient, demonstrater in practice, not just preaching in the abstract, what the correct correct line be. This will encourage workers to their place trust in the Party's tactics and consequently, in its political program.